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EDITED BY BARBARA K. GOLD



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Reference Works: Abbreviations

ActClass	<i>Acta Classica</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJP(h)	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
BMCR	<i>Bryn Mawr Classical Review</i>
CA	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
CB	<i>Classical Bulletin</i>
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
CLS	<i>Comparative Literature Studies</i>
CP	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CR	<i>Classical Review</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
CW	<i>Classical World</i>
G & R	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
GIF	<i>Giornale italiano di filologia</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
ICS	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
LCM	<i>Liverpool Classical Monthly</i>
MAAR	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
MD	<i>Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici</i>
PCP(h)S	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
PLLS	<i>Papers of the Liverpool/Leeds/Langford Latin Seminar</i>
SSR	<i>Studi storico-religiosi</i>
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

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Preface

My warm thanks go to all the contributors to this volume for their splendid essays, their unfailing patience and good humor with the sometimes tedious editorial process, and their willingness to treat what sometimes seemed like well-worn topics in new and original ways, even adding sparks of humor and ingenuity in places where we might least expect to find them.

The essays are an inspiring combination of coverage of the issues at hand, in such a way that the essay is made accessible to readers from a wide variety of backgrounds, and of new insights into these authors and topics. Students and teachers at different levels should all find something in here that they have not thought about before. I have learned much from reading these essays (over and over), and I am certain that readers will come away from using this volume with new and better ideas about how to read and how to teach elegy.

My thanks also go to two colleagues who have acted in an editorial capacity for my own essay, P. Lowell Bowditch and Nancy Rabinowitz, to Claire Coiro Bubb for her splendid work on the indices, and to my students, Andres Matlock and Meg Clary, for their sharp eyes in proofreading. Needless to say, they are only responsible for making improvements to it and not for any of its inferior qualities. The editors at Wiley-Blackwell, Haze Humbert, Acquisitions Editor, Classics and Ancient History, who commissioned the volume, and Galen Young, Project Editor, Classics, who dealt with many troublesome details especially around images and permissions, have been consistently helpful and patient, even acceding to my request to set up a web site so that some intertextual responses might happen.

Abbreviations of the titles of ancient texts are those listed in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edition) or the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*.

Barbara K. Gold
Hamilton College
July 2011

Introduction

Barbara K. Gold

There are two amazing things about Roman love elegy. One is that the entire genre (or subgenre) existed for only about 40 years. The other is that elegy nonetheless had an extraordinary and long-lived influence on subsequent art and literature (see Part VII [articles by Davis, Uden, Parker and Hooley] of this volume for elegy's literary *Nachleben*; for art, see Fredrick, Leach, Valladares and Welch in this volume).

Many questions persist about this subgenre (of lyric poetry), and these questions will be taken up in depth by the contributors to the volume. First, when we speak of Roman love elegy, what exactly do we mean? The narrowest and most basic defining characteristic of elegy is poetry written in the elegiac meter, couplets formed of one hexameter and one pentameter (or one hexameter and two hemiepes; see Morgan in this volume). If we are trying to define love elegy in particular, we can add the following: Roman love elegy was a book-length collection of poems; these poems were usually written in the first person; and many of these poems were written to or about a lover who is addressed by a specific name that is a poetic pseudonym (so Gallus' Lycoris, Tibullus' Delia, Propertius' Cynthia, Ovid's Corinna). Further, most of the love affairs recounted in the poetry are fraught with difficulty or end badly. And finally, Roman elegiac poetry, while purporting to be about an external lover, in fact is wholly inward-focused, centering almost entirely on the poet himself. So Coleridge said: "Elegy is the form of poetry natural to the reflective mind. It *may* treat of any subject, but it must treat of no subject *for itself*, but always and exclusively with reference to the poet himself" (*Table Talk*, quoted by Parker, this volume). Barchiesi, discussing the unifying perspective of Roman elegy, says that the essential feature of elegy is "the constant effect of an individual voice, which attracts toward itself every theme" (Casali 2009, 347, quoting and translating Barchiesi; see also Barchiesi 2001, 32; Gibson in this volume: "the lover's primary concern is for himself and not for his beloved").

Second, to what genre does Roman love elegy belong? There is general agreement that we cannot call elegy a genre in and of itself, since it is both too complex to fit into a single category and too idiosyncratic to be called simply “elegy.” As Farrell says, elegy was “a hybrid genre if there ever was one” (Farrell 2003, 397; Farrell, this volume, where he discusses “the dynamics of the elegiac canon” and refers to both “proto-elegy” and “meta-elegy”). Elegy contains within it the seeds of many other genres, e.g., epic, pastoral, comedy, and lyric. Its relationship to epic in particular is especially antagonistic and complex: the elegists repeatedly and specifically declare themselves, their poetry, and their chosen lifestyle to be anti-epic, and yet the traces of epic are everywhere. So when Propertius maintains in 2.1.17–46 and 3.9.1–4 that he will not, indeed cannot write the requested epic for Maecenas, he makes his point by writing a mini-epic (undercutting it by making a few errors but writing epic nonetheless, although in elegiac meter). And Propertius refers to his “battles” in bed with Cynthia as his Iliads (2.1.5–16). Elegy adopts and subsumes points of view not its own (Farrell 2003, 399; Conte 1994, 35ff.; Conte says that the ideology defined by *servitium amoris* [“the slavery of love”] “constructs for itself an organic language that works by transcodification, inasmuch as it transvalues from one system to another,” 38). So this process reformulates the world according to elegiac rules and sensibilities.

Third, who exactly should be included in the canon of Roman love elegists? The first-century BCE Roman educator and authority on rhetoric, Quintilian, says that only four authors belong to this exclusive group: Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid and Gallus (this is his order; chronologically, Gallus should be at the head of the list). But other authors could, and often do lay claim to membership in this club. The most significant of these is Catullus, who wrote many poems in elegiac meter and what is arguably the first Roman elegiac poem, poem 68 (see Miller 2007, 413: he contends that Catullus is “the progenitor of the elegiac subgenre”; but cf. also Wray in this volume, who says that Catullus “stops very far shy of elegy’s potential for enacting the horror of erotic obsession”). Catullus, in both his elegiac and his polymetric poems, handed down to the later elegists (who explicitly or implicitly acknowledge his importance) a “complex, self-reflexive, and multi-temporal consciousness” (Miller 2007, 413), a poetic subjectivity that is the brand of Roman love elegy. Other possible poets and poetry in this group include Sulpicia, the only extant female poet of Latin love elegy (see Hallett, Liveley and Skoie in this volume), Lygdamus (who, with Sulpicia, forms a part of Book 3 of the *Corpus Tibullianum*; see Skoie), and the poems of Ovid that are in elegiac meter but do not strictly fit the canonical definition of elegy: his *Heroides*, *Ars Amatoria*, and exile poetry (*Tristia*, *Epistulae ex Ponto*; on Ovid, see Sharrock and Boyd in this volume).

Fourth, is love elegy narrative poetry? Does it tell a story? Scholars in the past have pointed to the lack of action, plot, denouement, continuity and chronology as reasons to deny that we should look to Roman elegy for a story (Veyne 1988, 1–14, 50–66; he is right of course to deny that we should look for any genuine biographical details in these poems). But with the rise of new ways of interrogating literary landscapes (narratology, intertextuality), “narrativity is now seen as fundamental to the distinctive character and shape of Roman love elegy” (Liveley, “Narratology,” this volume; see O’Rourke, this volume, for intertextuality). Readers detect different kinds of narrators, developing subjectivities of characters, stories unfolded over different non-contiguous poems and even different books with possibly or probably historical characters used as symbols and

themes, chronotopes established and undercut, and themes repeated in different ways throughout books of elegies. One critic even sees Ovid's *Amores* as an "erotic novel" (N. Holzberg, cited by Liveley, "Narratology," this volume).

For those not inclined or able to see in a book of elegiac poetry a unified voice but rather a complex, shifting, polyvalent figure, psychoanalysis offers an interesting hermeneutic. So Janan (this volume) presents a Lacanian approach to help grapple with our ever-present desire for a unified subject so that "the fractured subject, and the disjunctive collection he subtends, become not problems to be solved, but insights to be grasped, enabling us better to contextualize and understand both" (Janan, this volume; cf. Miller 2007, 412–13, who discusses the split consciousness that we find in Catullus 68 and later elegy).

The characters as they are drawn by the elegists, even while we know they are fictions assembled from the many layers of literature and life, continue to fascinate us and make us wonder about "who they really were." Who was the *puella*, "too impossibly good and impossibly bad to be true" (Janan, this volume; cf. Keith, this volume, for the figure of the *domina*)? And what about the narrator, or elegiac persona, "bad, mad, and dangerous to know" (Hooley, this volume, quoting Lady Caroline Lamb)? Even as it is "historically impossible and aesthetically absurd to identify the paramours of the Roman love elegists" (Veyne 1988, 67) or the other characters of elegy, scholars have persisted in trying to "create a short circuit between individual texts and naked biographical realities" (Conte 1994, 113; but see Hallett, this volume, for an argument that autobiographical and realistic detail in the elegies confers amatory authority on the poets and adds to elegy's appeal). As Leach maintains, the response of the poet's internal readers "ostensibly merges poems and lifestyle lending to representation a sense of intimate reality that ... has made this interrelationship appear as narrative and given *persona* the look of autobiography" (Leach, this volume; cf. Conte 1994, 112ff).

Fifth is the fraught issue of gender. According to Maria Wyke, Propertian elegy "has three ... interlocking themes: love, writing and gender" (2002, 173). Women are, of course, central to Roman love elegy. Gender roles are clearly delineated, with subservience, dependency, passivity, and softness (*mollitia*) on one side, and mastery, dominance, and toughness (*duritia*) on the other. But in elegy, the traditional roles are reversed: it is men who are slaves of love (*servi amoris*), dependent on their female lovers, who are called *dominae* (mistresses, in the sense of "those who rule") and harsh (*durae*); so Propertius says "a hard-hearted girl spelled the end of this poor guy" ("huic misero fatum dura puella fuit," Prop. 2.1.78). As Ellen Greene discusses in her article on "Gender and Elegy" in this volume, this purported subversion of gender roles and attributes has prompted a debate among scholars about whether the poets are in fact ceding to women a genuine voice, subjectivity and agency, or are objectifying their mistresses and female characters, controlling them by their poetic authority while only pretending to be under their control. This debate has given rise to such essays as Miller's "Why Propertius is a Woman" (2004, 130–59), a Lacanian reading of gender in the Rome of the late Republic, and to comments such as this by Wyke: "Propertian elegy is not an obstinately male genre. It is engendered as masculine in its discursive mastery over the female object of its erotics and poetics, but engenders itself as effeminate in its association with softness, submissiveness, and impotence, and as feminine especially in its self-critique and its interrogation of Roman gender and sexuality" (2002, 189). Another

scholar maintains that “although Propertius never really relinquishes control over his material, he opens up spaces in his text in which we can feel and see the presence of ‘woman’” (Gold 1993, 92). Elegy is the first Roman genre to speak from a feminine point of view (in Sulpicia’s poetry) or as if from a woman’s point of view (Propertius 1.3, 3.6, 4.3, 4.7, 4.8), but clearly scholars differ on how to read this feminizing of Roman elegy (see Farrell 2003, 401 and n. 63; Keith and Boyd in this volume). As Greene sums it up, “No matter what particular line of argument one wants to take regarding the gender implications of elegy, it is clear that, as a genre, Roman elegy is a site for very complicated negotiations concerning traditional notions of gender, sexuality, and power” (essay in this volume).

The many contributors to this volume take up all these issues and debates as well as others not yet mentioned. In Part I, “The Text and Roman Erotic Elegists,” Joseph Farrell lays the groundwork for a possible definition of canonical Roman elegy (Quintilian’s quartet of Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid) and leads us nicely into a detailed discussion of these elegists by David Wray (whose “Catullus the Roman Love Elegist?” indicates by its interrogative form the question he takes up), W.R. Johnson (“Propertius”), Paul Allen Miller (“Tibullus”), Alison R. Sharrock (“Ovid”), and Mathilde Skoie (whose essay, “*Corpus Tibullianum*, Book 3,” discusses Sulpicia inter *alias/os*).

Roman love elegy may be fantasy or fiction, but it is also in many ways urban, grounded in Roman realities, and a part of the social, political and cultural context from which it arose. So in part II, “Historical and Material Context,” three contributors examine the cultural and ideological contexts in which elegy is grounded. Tara S. Welch, in “Elegy and the Monuments,” looks at the urbanism of elegy and how we can read Roman monuments. P. Lowell Bowditch, in “Roman Love Elegy and the Eros of Empire,” discusses the idea of empire in elegy and the ways in which elegy seduces its readers through the rhetoric of luxury while presenting Rome as a metropolitan center. Eleanor Winsor Leach, in “Rome’s Elegiac Cartography: The View from the *Via Sacra*,” examines what makes Roman elegy so Roman and how *Romanitas* is represented in the cartography of elegists from Catullus to Ovid in his exile poetry.

Canonical elegy had its antecedents in both Greek elegy and earlier Roman elegy. In part III, “Influences,” Richard Hunter, in “Callimachus and Roman Elegy,” looks at this intriguing and important figure and his implicit and explicit, general and specific influence on the Roman elegists. Roy K. Gibson, in “Gallus: the First Roman Love Elegist,” starting us off with a surprise twist, talks about our almost irrational fascination with this all but lost progenitor of Roman love elegy and the many attempts to recover intertexts with subsequent elegy.

Roman elegy has its own distinct style, meter, poetic patterns and arrangements, and diction. In Part IV, “Stylistics and Discourse,” Duncan F. Kennedy, in “Love’s Tropes and Figures,” addresses the elegists’ skills in troping and the embeddedness of the poetic tropes in an infuriatingly elusive form of expressiveness. Llewelyn Morgan, in “Elegiac Meter: Opposites Attract,” tackles (with a surprisingly light touch and sense of humor) the topic of meter and the communicative power that the manipulations of this meter embodied. S.J. Heyworth, in “The Elegiac Book: Patterns and Problems,” grapples with the difficult issue of book arrangement and structure from Gallus to Ovid, with Propertius as the most problematic case. Vincent Katz, in “Translating Roman Elegy,” brings a

professional translator's eye to discussions of using translation as a tool for literary analysis and making translation into a work of art.

Part V, "Aspects of Production," foregrounds in its seven essays particular ways in which elegy relates to its social, historical and cultural contexts. In "Elegy and New Comedy," Sharon L. James finds the deep roots of elegy in New Comedy (Plautus, Terence), from social structures and sexual relations to social class. Judith P. Hallett, in "Authorial Identity in Latin Love Elegy: Literary Fictions and Erotic Failings," reads elegy against its contemporary Roman background, arguing for the importance of realistic and autobiographical details in the poetry. In "The *Domina* in Roman Elegy," Alison Keith discusses the textualization of one of the most vexing figures in elegy, the *puella*, and the gender dynamics of the roles these *puellae* play. Barbara K. Gold, in "Patronage and the Elegists: Social Reality or Literary Construction?," discusses the importance of patronage and the role of the patron in Roman elegy, in particular the patron as amatory and triumphal figure. Hérica Valladares, in her essay "Elegy, Art and the Viewer," opens up the intensely visual quality of Roman elegy and the important role that viewing and vision play in our appreciation of Roman elegy. Another significant method of approaching Roman elegy, and one that, like viewing, has gained increasing attention recently, is performance. Mary-Kay Gamel, in "Performing Sex, Gender and Power in Roman Elegy," offers us a different way of negotiating these poems: through dramatic readings. Finally Ellen Greene takes up the aspect of gender in "Gender and Elegy"; she explores the roles that the female beloveds play in elegy – as objects of male fantasies of domination or examples of female subjectivity?

In Part VI, "Approaches," the contributors give us four different critical methodologies that allow us entries into Roman elegy. Micaela Janan, in "Lacanian Psychoanalytic Theory and Roman Love Elegy," articulates how concepts of Lacanian psychoanalysis can elucidate key issues in elegy such as subjectivity and sexual difference. Donncha O'Rourke, in "Intertextuality in Roman Elegy," takes up one of the most prominent and stimulating hermeneutical approaches used by recent scholars: the conversation between the texts of two or more authors and how that conversation informs both the source and the target texts. Genevieve Liveley, in "Narratology in Roman Elegy," invokes narratological theory as an important way to read across books of poetry or to read the narrative features of an individual elegy. And David Fredrick, in "The Gaze and the Elegiac Imaginary," borrows from film theory, gender theory, and the viewing of art to elucidate the importance of the gaze and the imaginary in the specific political context of Roman elegy.

Part VII, "Late Antique Elegy and Reception," takes us to the *Nachleben* of Roman elegy. P.J. Davis, in "Reception of Elegy in Augustan and Post-Augustan Poetry," concentrates on five authors who engage with Roman elegy: Virgil (and Gallus), Horace (and Tibullus), Seneca (and Ovid, *Heroides*), Valerius Flaccus (and Propertius), and Statius (and Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*). James Uden, in "Love Elegies of Late Antiquity," focuses on the expansion in thematic range and scope in later elegiac poets and examines three distinct modes of engagement: established scripts and characters replayed in an Ovidian manner; the Christian poets' wedding of amatory themes to elegiac meter set against a rhetoric of impossible, divine paradox; and the new uses of the *militia amoris* theme in poets of the 4th to 6th centuries. Holt N. Parker, in "Renaissance Latin Elegy," continues the journey into later poetry; he covers a wide variety of neo-Latin authors and

works from the *Hermaphroditus* of Antonio Beccadelli (alias “Panormita”) in the 15th century to the poets writing in both vernacular and Latin like Jan Kochanowski in the late 16th century. Finally Dan Hooley, in “Modernist Reception,” investigates the after-life of Roman elegy in more recent literature from the first third of the twentieth century in authors such as Pound and Lowell.

The final section, Part VIII: “Pedagogy,” focuses on concerns around the teaching of Roman elegy. Ronnie Ancona, in “Teaching Roman Love Elegy,” bases her comments here largely on her informal survey of classicists and on her own teaching experience, giving us possible new ways of introducing elegy to both students with Latin and those reading elegy in English. Barbara Weiden Boyd writes specifically about Ovid in “Teaching Ovid’s Love Elegy,” covering changing approaches to Ovid’s elegiac presence in the classroom, and categories of analysis that could be used for the teaching and study of Ovid’s love elegy: Gender, Cultural and Political Contexts, Genre and Intertextuality. The final essay in the volume, “Teaching Rape in Roman Elegy,” is divided into two parts by two different authors. Genevieve Liveley first investigates this topic for courses taught in the United Kingdom, while Sharon James does the same for courses taught in the United States. Both ask pressing questions that often arise from today’s students (especially, but not only, from female students), worrisome questions that hit at the heart of personal response to the poetry and to our students: the relation between representation and reality; what kinds of matters we should be raising in our reading and teaching of elegy; resistant ways of reading; how to teach disturbing subjects.

This volume contains a rich trove of material, both helpful summaries of important information about Roman love elegy and new insights into the many and varied topics covered by the contributors. I hope that it will appeal to, enlighten and delight the many kinds of students and teachers who read and use it.

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PART I

**The Text and Roman
Erotic Elegists**

CHAPTER 1

Calling out the Greeks: Dynamics of the Elegiac Canon

Joseph Farrell

Quintilian names Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid as the canonical poets of Roman elegy. His comments are brief enough that they can be quoted in full:

Elegia quoque Graecos provocamus, cuius mihi tersus atque elegans maxime videtur auctor Tibullus. Sunt qui Propertium malint. Ovidius utroque lascivior, sicut durior Gallus.

(Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.93)

In elegy too we challenge the Greeks; I think its most polished and elegant author is Tibullus, but there are those who prefer Propertius. Compared to either of these Ovid is rather unrestrained, just as Gallus is rather stiff.

(All translations are my own)

In spite of his brevity, Quintilian gives us a lot to discuss; but his brevity itself deserves comment. Of all genres only iambus receives as skimpy treatment as elegy, each occupying about 1% of Quintilian's canon. Moreover, Quintilian says that the Romans never really treated iambus as a proper genre, whereas he considers elegy a genre in which Roman writers successfully challenge the Greeks for supremacy. Why then does he say so little about it?

Quintilian's Roman canon is of course modeled on an earlier Greek one, and it may be important that he has even less to say about Greek elegy, which he dispatches in a single sentence of sixteen words. (The relevant portion is italicized in the passage quoted below.) And the way Quintilian introduces Greek elegy is telling, as well. After discussing epic poetry, Quintilian mentions elegy via an elaborate *praeteritio* designed to anticipate complaints that he ignores a great number of capable poets. His justification?

Nec sane quisquam est tam procul a cognitione eorum remotus ut non indicem certe ex bibliotheca sumptum transferre in libros suos possit. Nec ignoro igitur quos transeo nec utique damno, ut qui dixerim esse in omnibus utilitatis aliquid. Sed ad illos iam perfectis constitutisque viribus revertemur: quod in cenis grandibus saepe facimus, ut, cum optimis satiati sumus, varietas tamen nobis ex vilioribus grata sit. *tunc et elegiam vacabit in manus sumere, cuius princeps habetur Callimachus, secundas confessione plurimorum Philitas occupavit.* Sed dum adsequimur illam firmam, ut dixi, facilitatem, optimis adsuescendum est et multa magis quam multorum lectione formanda mens et ducendus color.

(Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.57–59)

Neither is there anyone so far from understanding these things that he could not transfer into his own books a catalogue taken from a library. Nor am I, therefore, unaware of the writers whom I pass over. And, certainly, I do not condemn them, having already said that there is something useful in all. But we shall return to them when our powers have been established and made perfect: as we often do in great banquets, so that that after we are sated with the best dishes, the variety of plainer food is still pleasant. *Then we shall have time to take up even elegy, of which Callimachus is considered the principal author and Philitas, in the opinion of most, has taken second place.* But while acquiring that solid ability, as I said, we must grow accustomed to the best, and one's mind must be formed, one's style informed, by reading much rather than many.

Elegy is the only Greek genre to receive such ostentatiously marginalizing treatment. In comparison, Quintilian's remarks about the Roman elegists, scanty as they are, seem that much more impressive. One might almost wonder whether Quintilian ever did read Callimachus and Philitas.

Perhaps this all has something to do with the fact that Quintilian simply takes both canons directly from the Roman elegists themselves. Propertius opens his third book with the following invocation:

Callimachi manes et Coi sacra Philitae,
in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus.
primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos
Italia per Graios orgia ferre choros.

(Prop. 3.1.1–4)

Shades of Callimachus and sacraments belonging to Philitas of Cos, permit me, please, to enter your grove. I am the first to attempt to combine Italian revelry with Greek ceremony, drawing inspiration as your priest from a pristine source.

No doubt Propertius is following a Greek critical tradition that named these poets to the elegiac canon. But his decision to invoke them – to call them out – as predecessors is significant, as we shall see. Some years later, Ovid would name Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius, and himself as the canonical poets of Roman elegy:

Vergilium vidi tantum, nec avara Tibullo
tempus amicitiae fata dedere meae.
successor fuit hic tibi, Galle, Propertius illi;
quartus ab his serie temporis ipse fui.

(Ov. *Tr.* 4.10.51–54)

Vergil I merely saw, nor did miserly fate give Tibullus much time to be my friend. He was your successor, Gallus, and Propertius his: with the passage of time I myself was fourth after them.

So Quintilian basically repeats what Propertius and Ovid said while they were attempting to define a Roman elegiac canon on the model of the Greek one and to inscribe themselves into it. This is not to say that Quintilian is wrong or eccentric: most people in his day as now probably agreed about who the canonical authors of Roman elegy were, because Propertius and Ovid were obviously successful in defining the canon on terms favorable to themselves. But, if Quintilian had undertaken any real comparison between these Greek and Roman canons, it is difficult to imagine what he would have said; because elegy as written by Callimachus and Philitas and elegy as written at Rome are almost totally different genres.

If we define canonical Greek elegy as the sort of poetry written by Callimachus and Philitas, then we are speaking of mythological narratives often of some length. Callimachus' *Aetia* was a four-book collection of poems on the origins of various Greek cultural institutions in which the poet's persona is exclusively that of an extraordinarily erudite researcher. Love, although it figures in such stories as "Acontius and Cydippe" (fr. 67–75 Pf) and "The Lock of Berenice" (fr. 110 Pf), is hardly among Callimachus' principal themes. Philitas' persona must have also have emphasized erudition – he is remembered as the prototypical Alexandrian *poeta doctus* or "poet and critic in one" (ποιητής ἄμα καὶ κριτικός, Strabo 14.2.19, 657c) – but we are also told that he wrote because he was in love with a woman named Bittis (more on this below). If this is true, then Philitas must have represented himself as a lover, something that Callimachus (except in some epigrams) did not do. As for Philitas, so far as we know, mythology was his principal subject. His own longing for Bittis may have been a device to "explain" his interest in the myths and to provide a frame for them. But in any case, both Callimachus and Philitas are known to have written third-person, narrative elegies.

If, however, we define Roman elegy as the kind of poetry that Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid wrote, we find that it is very different. All of them wrote in the first person, each about a love affair with a particular woman (or, in Tibullus' case, with two different women successively). The names of these women suggest Greek culture and literary sophistication (Randall 1979). The women themselves are represented as lacking the status of citizen birth and as living off their attractiveness to the kind of men the poets make themselves out to be (James 2002, 37–41). The persona of the lover boasts a literary culture beyond any rival and just enough wealth that actual work never enters into consideration, but not so much that he fails to resent the lady's demands for gifts – the main area in which those less cultivated rivals actually can surpass him (James 2002, 71–107). The poet/lover therefore lives in a state of constant jealousy, enthrallment, and inability to satisfy the whims of his *domina* – his "mistress" in more than the modern sense because the word connotes actual domination, as over a slave (Copley 1947; Lilja 1965, 71–89; Lyne 1979; Murgatroyd 1981; McCarthy 1998; Fitzgerald 2000, 72–77). A recurrence, sometimes morbid and sometimes humorous, to the theme of death is also in evidence (Gibson 2005, 171). Each poet makes his own variations on these themes, but the basic elements are the same. Mythology is a frequent point of reference, but straightforward mythological narrative (as in Prop. 1.20) is rare. The poems are

generally brief, and the ensembles do not involve the elaborate framing devices employed by Callimachus or (perhaps) Philitas.

Two very different canons, then – a situation that we do not find in any other genre that Quintilian mentions. How did it come about? We can best answer this question by investigating the pre-history of Quintilian's canons – which, of course, did not simply spring into being all of a sudden, but were the end result of a dynamic process of poetic and critical self-fashioning that began in the Hellenistic period and took a long time to complete.

The Proto-canon of Hermesianax and Its Influence

Representing Greek elegy as a proper genre was a challenge for Hellenistic canon makers (Murray 2010). From the perspective of Roman elegy, two poets from Colophon, an Ionian city not far from Ephesus, were an important part of this process. Mimnermus belongs to the seventh century BCE, and his works survive only in excerpts quoted by later writers. But these tell us that he collected his elegies and dedicated them to a *hetaira* called Nanno. It seems more than just possible that he provided a model for his countryman Antimachus, who in the late fifth century also named an elegiac poem after his beloved, Lyde – a foreigner, as her name (“woman from Lydia”) shows. The two poets are frequently mentioned together, as they are in *Leontium*, another elegiac poem which was composed in about 330 BCE by Hermesianax – also of Colophon! – and which he also named after his mistress. This is quite a tradition of erotic elegy produced within a single Greek city (Spanoudakis 2001).

Leontium, like the elegies of Callimachus and Philitas, seems mainly to have told mythological love stories in the third person, like that of Polyphemus and Galatea (fr. 1 Powell). But an entertaining passage from the third and last book of the poem (fr. 7 Powell) gives a catalogue of poets and philosophers who felt the pangs of love. Here Hermesianax mentions three elegiac poets, Mimnermus, Antimachus, and Philitas. Of Mimnermus we learn that he loved Nanno and that “he suffered much and invented the sweet sound and spirit of the soft pentameter” (Μίμνερμος δὲ, τὸν ἡδὺν ὃς εὗρετο πολλὸν ἀνατλάς / ἦχον καὶ μαλακοῦ πνεῦμα τὸ πενταμέτρου, 35–36). This is important for representing Mimnermus as the inventor of elegiac poetry in response to his lovesickness – which is effectively to define elegy as love poetry. We next learn that Antimachus was “struck by love for Lydian Lyde ... and wept when she died and placed her under the dry earth ... and filled his sacred books with laments” (Λυδῆς Ἀντίμαχος Λυδηίδος ἐκ μὲν ἔρωτος / πληγεῖς ... θανοῦσαν ὑπὸ ξηρὴν θέτο γαῖαν / κλαίων ... γόων δ' ἐνεπλήσατο βίβλους / ἱράς 41–46; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 106b–c). Again Hermesianax associates elegy with love for a particular woman and adds the important element of grief to that of erotic longing. Philitas, the last poet named in the entire catalogue, is cast in the same mold: “you know as well the poet ... Philitas, who sang of nimble Bittis” (οἶσθα δὲ καὶ τὸν αἰοδόν ... Βιττίδα μολπάζοντα θοήν ... Φιλίταν, 75–77). Why exactly Bittis should be “nimble” is something of a puzzle. In this regard, it is tempting to follow those who render θοήν as “fickle” (Knox 1993, 66; Bing 2003, 341 n. 44), thus introducing the theme of rivalry into the mix. In any case, the facts are these: Our catalogue is found in an elegiac poem. It names three elegiac poets in the company of others

representing such genres as epic, lyric, and tragedy. It thus implies that elegy is to be considered a genre on the same terms as they. In fact, it emphasizes elegy especially by naming three elegiac poets, as compared with no more than two from any other genre. It names Mimnermus as inventor of this genre and concludes with Philitas, making elegy the only genre that is represented as having a history that extends from the distant past to the present day. Finally, the elegists mentioned are all characterized as poet-lovers, each devoted to particular woman, at least one of them a courtesan, a second foreign, and the third fickle. Finally, all three of them share their names with an elegiac poetry book.

Canon formation is not a disinterested process, especially in the case of someone who is poet and critic in one. It is hard not to infer that Hermesianax – perhaps following the teachings of Philitas – designed this part of his poem as a capsule history of Greek love elegy. Far from being mere reportage, it is instead a speech act, a calling into being of the tradition to which the poet presents himself as heir. And in establishing his pedigree, he consigns all other forms of early Greek elegy to oblivion. The catalogue is therefore important not only for what it says, but for what it does not say, for if we survey the earlier elegiac poets whom Hermesianax does not name, we find them an interesting if miscellaneous bunch.

The great Archilochus, whose name was chiefly identified with iambic poetry, composed elegiacs on martial themes, and his contemporaries Callinus of Ephesus and Tyrtaeus of Sparta used elegy to exhort their countrymen to virtue in battle. The Athenian statesman Solon adapted this approach to the civic sphere. Theognis of Megara, operating in the private setting of the symposium, blends reflection on civic themes with other characteristic motifs of sympotic poetry. Love is prominent among all these poets, although for Theognis it is the idealized man/boy relationship between *erastes* and *eromenos* that matters. These poets belong to the same period as Mimnermus; yet Hermesianax ignores them and states simply that Mimnermus “invented” (εὑρετο) the genre in response to his love for the woman Nanno.

Hermesianax, besides ignoring these other poets, excludes any hint of their characteristic themes from his treatment of other genres. Thus Homer (27–34) is represented not as a martial poet but as a kind of Pygmalion figure who fell in love with his own creation, Penelope. Alcaeus (47–50), later remembered for his civic themes (*Lesbio ... civi*, Hor. *Carm.* 1.32.5), appears (anachronistically) as rival (cf. Bittis’ fickleness) to Anacreon for the love of Sappho; while Anacreon himself (51–56), whose erotic poetry (like that of Theognis) focuses on *eromenoi*, is represented as a lover of women. Sophocles (57–60), also a celebrated *erastes* (Ath. 13, 603e–604f), appears here as the lover of Theoris, (Ath. 13, 592a; *Vita Soph.* 13; Hesychius Θ 476); while Euripides (61–68), formerly hateful to all women (because of how he depicted them in his plays, Ar. *Thesm.* 81–87), ends up pursuing a serving girl. In effect, by excluding certain characteristic themes from the genres of epic, lyric, and tragedy Hermesianax assimilates all three genres to the condition of elegy as he wishes to define it.

One aspect of the elegiac tradition that Hermesianax does not exclude has to do with death and lamentation. During the Classical period the epitaph was an extremely widespread form of elegiac verse. It may be partly responsible for the idea that elegy (etymologized either as an expression of grief, ἔλλεγεν, “to cry woe, woe,” or as “eulogy,” εὐλέγειν: *Etym. magn.* 326.48; Orion *Etym.* col. 58.7 Sturz) was the appropriate genre for funeral poetry. Simonides of Ceos was remembered mainly as a lyricist, but he was

especially celebrated for his funeral poetry (Dion. Hal. *De imit.* 2.2.6; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.64) including his epitaphs, virtually all of which are in elegiacs. Modern appreciation of his stature as an elegist was enhanced by the discovery of a poem commemorating those who died in the Battle of Plataea in 479 (Parsons 1992). This gave us an important Classical example in which the characteristic concerns of the epitaph are developed in a substantial elegiac poem that was read for a long time and was influential: the papyrus that preserves it dates to the second century CE and echoes have been found in Horace, as well (Barchiesi 1996a, 1996b).

Hermesianax acknowledges elegy as poetry of lamentation when he mentions Antimachus' mourning for Lyde (43–44). But he also begins his entire catalogue with Orpheus, who descended to Hades out of love for Argiope (a variant for the usual Eurydice, 1–14), and Musaeus, who made Antiope renowned even after her death (15–20). In this way he makes love and death themes of the earliest, archetypal poets, suggesting a special affinity between elegy and the oldest forms of Greek poetry. If we add lament to the other elements that Hermesianax associates with the elegiac genre – a poet-lover's devotion to a single woman, a woman whom he names and who is herself cultivated but of socially inferior and perhaps foreign status, perhaps not constant in her affections; a concomitant tendency to exclude homoerotic themes; a tendency to exclude martial or civic themes – then the perspective on elegy that Hermesianax represents comes all the more to resemble that of canonical Roman elegy.

It is difficult not to infer that Hermesianax's selective history of Greek elegy had some influence on the formation of Roman elegy, possibly thanks to the Greek poet-critic Parthenius of Nicaea, who himself composed an elegiac *Arete* in three books in which he lamented the death of his wife (Lightfoot 1999: 31–34) and who dedicated a work on “Disastrous Love Affairs” (περί ἐρωτικῶν παθημάτων) to none other than Gallus, the first of the canonical Roman elegists. But in any case, this perspective was influential in respect to both what the genre included and what it excluded. First and foremost, the Roman poet-lover represents himself as being obsessed with one woman (Gibson 2005, 160). Other women enter into consideration as emblems of jealousy on the part of the *domina* (Prop. 1.3.35–36; 4.7; 4.8), as part of the poet-lover's attempt to cure his infatuation (Tib. 1.5.39–42), or merely as occasional transgressions (Prop. 2.22; Ov. *Am.* 2.7, 8). Boys appear as love objects very infrequently as an element of counterpoint to the main relationship (e.g. Tib. 1.4, 8, 9; Prop. 2.4.17–18; Ov. *Am.* 1.1.20; 1.8.68), somewhat as happens in the Greek novel. The lady with whom the poet-lover is obsessed is, like Mimnermus' Nanno and perhaps other Greek elegiac women (not to mention the *meretrices* of New Comedy: see James 2002, 21–38), a courtesan of non-citizen status. As I have noted, she gives the poet-lover reason to be concerned about rivals.

The theme of death is also well represented in Roman elegy. Tibullus' mind is never far from death, and in poem 1.3 he imagines himself as dying and being taken by Venus to a quasi-Homeric Elysian fields while sinners against love are tortured in Tartarus. Propertius, near the end of his first book, anticipates a future in which either he will mourn for Cynthia or she for him (1.19.15–24); and in book 4 he fulfills this prophecy, devoting an entire poem to a dream in which Cynthia, dead and buried, appears to him from beyond the grave (4.7). In Ovid's *Amores*, poem 2.6 is a humorous lament over the death of Corinna's parrot (alluding to Lesbia's sparrow in Cat. 2 and 3), and poem 3.9 is a moving lament on the death of Tibullus.

On the other hand, Hermesianax's exclusion of martial elegy from his account is reflected in the rejection of martial themes by Roman elegists along with the life of the soldier and all it stands for. For the Roman elegist, martial poetry is epic poetry, and the relation between the two genres was usually conceived as antithetical. That is the point of a passage in which Propertius declares that Mimnermus is a better ally to those in love than Homer is (1.9.11–12). This antipathy of course extends to actual soldiery. Tibullus consistently represents his choice of an indolent, inglorious life as a positive rejection of military values (e.g. 1.3, 10). Propertius is readier to assert that the life of love is superior to the soldier's life on the soldier's own terms: *laus in amore mori*, he says ("it is a praiseworthy thing to die in love" 2.1.47). Thus the theme of *militia amoris*, of being a soldier in the army of love (Murgatroyd 1975), a conceit that receives its wittiest and most extensive expression at the hands of Ovid (*militat omnis amans*, "every lover is a soldier," *Am.* 1.9.1).

Of course, this mix of ingredients can be found in Roman poets who antedate those of Quintilian's elegiac canon. Catullus above all exemplifies many of the genre's defining features: his obsession with one woman; the name that he gives her; the themes of death and lamentation. Poem 68 combines erotic and funereal themes with mythological exempla to form what many critics (e.g. Luck 1982: 407) consider the best surviving example of proto-elegiac poetry. And crucially, Catullus represents outstandingly the personal voice that defines Roman elegy in contrast to its Greek models. We cannot be certain that a similar perspective informed the work of Catullus' contemporaries, like Varro Atacinus and Gaius Licinius Calvus, but these writers did share other elegiac elements. Varro wrote to or about a *puella* whom he called Leucadia, "woman of Leucas"; and the promontory of Leucas (modern Cape Lefkada) was where Sappho (cf. Catullus' Lesbia, "woman of Lesbos"), according to legend, leapt to her death in despondency over her unrequited love for Phaon (Strabo 10.2.9, citing Menander; Suda Φ 89 Adler). Whether death was an explicit theme in Varro's *Leucadia* our sources do not say; but Calvus' *Quintilia* was a lament for the death of his *puella* (Cat. 96) by a poet who also wrote about various other erotic adventures (Prop. 2.34.89–90).

It is interesting that both Propertius and Ovid acknowledge all these poets as elegiac predecessors. In what looks like an early attempt at self-canonization, Propertius names Varro, Catullus, Calvus, Gallus, and himself as Rome's great love poets (2.34.85–94). Similarly Ovid imagines the deceased Tibullus as taking his place alongside Calvus, Catullus, and Gallus in a lover's Elysium (*Am.* 3.9.59–66, a conceit borrowed from Tib. 1.3.57–66). These two poems are very nearly contemporary: Propertius wrote shortly before and Ovid shortly after the death of Vergil and Tibullus in 19 BCE. This fact helps to explain some of the differences between the two lists, but in general they reflect very similar perspectives on the history of the genre as it was understood at that time.

At this point we should pause and take stock. We began by considering Quintilian's canons of Greek and Roman elegy, noting that the two genres appear quite different from one another and that Quintilian is anticipated by Propertius and Ovid in naming Callimachus and Philotas to the Greek canon and Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid to the Roman one. But we then traced the apparent influence of a proto-canon of Greek elegy upon Roman poets in the first century BCE, and noted that Propertius and Ovid also recognize a Roman proto-canon that reflects this influence. It seems, then, that canonical Roman elegy developed under the influence of both these Greek traditions. Can we say more?

Callimachus: Style and Genre

To understand what happened we must return to the Hellenistic period and to Callimachus. In the history of Greek elegy, Philitas is a relatively uncontroversial figure, the only poet who appears in the canons of both Hermesianax and Quintilian. Mimnermus and especially Antimachus are another matter. Hermesianax approved of them, and, if he was Philitas' pupil, then he may have got this opinion from his master. But Callimachus, who lived about two generations after Hermesianax and three after Philitas, did not share it; and thereby hangs a tale.

Like Philitas, but only more so, Callimachus was important as a poet and as a critic, and some passages of his poetry are among the most influential literary-critical documents that we have from antiquity. Here is a passage from the beginning of his *Aetia*:

.....ρεην [ὀλ]ιγόστιχος• ἀλλὰ καθέλκει
 ...]πολὸν τὴν μακρὴν ὄμπνια Θεσμοφόρο[ς.
 τοῖν δὲ] δυοῖν Μίμνερμος ὅτι γλυκύς, α[.....
]ἡ μεγάλη δ' οὐκ ἐδίδαξε γυνή.

[...] in few verses; but the nourishing goddess who gives laws far outweighs the long [... But of the] two, that Mimnermus is sweet, [...] but the big woman did not teach.

(Callim. *Aet.* fr. 1.9–12 Pf)

The text is scrappy (even more here than in Pfeiffer 1949, since I exclude some uncertain supplements), but we are helped to interpret it by a pair of ancient commentaries (also in Pfeiffer 1949). Lines 9–10 appear to contrast a long poem on some unknown topic with one that Callimachus prefers, which the commentaries identify as Philitas' *Demeter*. Then (11–12) there is a contrast between two other poems, one teaching that Mimnermus is sweet, while the other – which Callimachus calls “the big woman” – does not. The commentaries say that “the big woman” is Mimnermus' *Nanno*; some modern scholars think that there must also (or instead) be a swipe at Antimachus' *Lyde* on the basis of a fragment from one of Callimachus' other works: Λύδη, καὶ παχὺ γράμμα καὶ οὐ τορόν, “*Lyde*, a screed both thick and unclear” (fr. 398 Pf; Matthews 1996, 65–66).

Care is obviously needed, but some conclusions can be drawn. It seems that Callimachus approved of Philitas' *Demeter* but disapproved of or said nothing about his *Bittis*; approved of something by Mimnermus, but perhaps not his *Nanno*; and, whatever he thought of Antimachus' other poetry, hated his *Lyde*. This is a very different perspective from that of Hermesianax, one that emphasizes Philitas' aetiological poetry and deprecates the poems that Mimnermus and Antimachus dedicated to the women they loved. It may be that Callimachus' objections have more to do with style than content, and it is not clear whether they have to do with elegy as a genre. But the passage can be taken that way, so that Callimachus appears not to approve of the kind of poetry on which Hermesianax had based his elegiac canon (Cameron 1995, 303–39).

The Roman elegists thus found almost diametrically different perspectives on elegy in their Hellenistic predecessors. Their response was evidently to borrow such elements as the persona of the poet-lover, the exotic *puella*, the theme of lamentation, and so forth

from the tradition outlined by Hermesianax. But, like virtually all Roman poets, they also came under the immense influence of Callimachus' opinions regarding poetic style.

This influence becomes especially visible and nearly inescapable in the first century BCE. It has mainly to do with ideals that apply equally to many genres of poetry, according to which qualities such as "few," "small," "light," and "thin" contrast favorably with "many," "large," "heavy," and "thick." In some cases a Roman poet draws a Callimachean contrast within a single genre, as Vergil does in the sixth *Eclogue* to justify his singing slender, pastoral epic instead of inflated, heroic epic (3–8). But it was also common for elegy to define epic exclusively as heroic poetry and to contrast itself with epic as a "slighter" or "humbler" genre (Prop. 2.1, 3.3; Ov. *Am.* 1.1). Thus the elegists tend to use Callimachean ideas and images to promote the cause of elegy at the expense of epic.

Consider in this regard Propertius' poems to Ponticus in book 1. This friend with a triumphal name is introduced as attempting to write an epic *Thebaid* that will rival Homer for first place in the epic canon while Propertius tries to win fame as a love elegist (7.1–10). The poem concludes by warning Ponticus not to look down on Propertius' efforts (*cave ... contemnas* 25): should Ponticus ever fall in love, his expertise in heroic verse will be no use to him as he tries to write love poetry, and he will envy Propertius his elegiac skill (15–26). Here it is relevant that Antimachus was the author of an epic *Thebaid* that won him, according to Quintilian, second place to Homer in the Greek canon, but that was deficient in all aspects of its artistry, "so that it is really quite obvious how different it is to be close to first than it is to be second" (*Inst.* 10.1.53). Propertius thus predicts for Ponticus an Antimachean career, moving unsuccessfully from epic to elegy. This is close to what Hermesianax had said about Antimachus: whatever his previous accomplishments, when it came to love he had to retool himself as an elegist. But it is also close to Callimachus' opinion that the *Lyde* was a failure. To this extent, Propertius seems to reconcile the two traditions. In another poem (1.9) he refers again to Ponticus' contempt (*irrisor* 1) and tells him that a line of Mimnermus is more useful to the lover than Homer, presumably in his entirety (11–12). Here we may recall that, according to Hermesianax, Homer wrote the *Odyssey* and then fell in love with Penelope, his own creation.

Propertius clearly wrote these poems with Hellenistic debates about the epic and elegiac canons in mind. We have already seen that he was thinking about the composition of the Roman elegiac canon in the final poem of his second book. Then in the first poem of book 3 he returns to the Greek canon, invoking Callimachus and Philitas, the Greek poets of Quintilian's elegiac canon, "calling them out" in a sense different from the one that Quintilian intended. The gesture is complicated by the fact that Callimachus was both a canonical elegist and a symbol of certain stylistic ideals; also by the fact that these ideals transcended generic categories and that Roman elegies were not much like his. An ambivalence is thus present in the image of the "uncontaminated source" (*puro de fonte*, Prop. 3.1.3), which is specifically Callimachean (*Hymn* 2.108–12) and is adapted by poets of many different genres as an emblem of stylistic refinement (e.g. Lucr. 1.927 = 4.2; Hor. *Sat.* 1.1.55–56; Ov. *Am.* 2.16.1–2; see Kambylis 1965, 98–102; Wimmel 1960, 272–74). But by calling out Callimachus and Philitas as the *auctores* who define the Greek elegiac canon, Propertius is claiming to go directly back to the source in another sense: not just the source of refined stylistic inspiration that is available to all

poets, but to the canonical model of elegiac excellence. Similarly, when he claims the title *Callimachus Romanus* (4.1.64), he is not just boasting about his refined style but asserting that there should be a canon of Roman elegiac poets and that he should be in it.

Already at the end of book 2 (34.31–32) Propertius had singled out Callimachus and Philitas as defining the Greek elegiac canon, and he was to do so repeatedly in books 3 and 4 (3.9.43–44; 4.6.3–4; cf. 3.3.52). And it is in these late stages of his career that Propertius does begin to produce poems on Roman aetiological topics that are in keeping with the substance of Callimachus' *Aetia*. He does not abandon the characteristic themes of the earlier books, but he greatly complicates them by adopting a more Callimachean (i.e. aetiological, narrative) conception of elegy. He writes about religious festivals and historical monuments (while emphasizing any possible erotic elements) and even introduces Roman matrons and allows them to speak (although they tend to speak in elegiac language, one even describing herself as a *puella*: 4.3.45, 72). Tibullus, too, devotes one poem to the festival of the Ambarvalia (2.1) and another to the elevation of his patron's son to Roman priestly office (2.5). Ovid writes about a religious festival held in honor of Juno Curitis, a goddess who presides over, of all things, marriage; accordingly, in this same poem (*Am.* 3.13) he goes so far as to introduce the reader to his wife!

This interest in religious matters and social conventions on the part of all three elegists is something one meets in the final books of their respective oeuvres. Is it then a sign of each poet's ambition, once he had exhausted the possibilities presented by the genre, to enlarge it so as to encompass quite different themes? And to what extent is this expansion related to Propertius' heightened interest in the Greek elegiac canon? Ovid, too, mentions Callimachus and Philitas as a pair not in the *Amores*, but in his erotodidactic works (*Ars* 3.329; *Rem.* 759–760), which he wrote after he had in effect left canonical Roman elegy behind and embarked on a program of meta-elegiac exploration that would occupy him for the remainder of his career. After the *Amores*, everything that Ovid wrote engages with elegiac forms and motifs in ways that take him well outside the boundaries of the genre. The erotodidactic poems, the *Ars amatoria*, the *Remedia amoris*, and the *Medicamina faciei femineae*, deal with erotic themes but challenge the conventional elegiac paradigm both formally (they are much longer than any previous elegy) and in how they define the elegiac lover and his condition. Instead of an abject figure enslaved to an imperious female, Ovid the *praeceptor amoris* (*Ars* 1.17) presents himself as a technical expert and effective teacher, masterful and successful in all aspects of love and sex, treating women as so much prey. (The metaphor of hunting runs right through the poem: see Gibson 2003, 274.) But this is to describe only books 1 and 2, which are addressed to men; book 3 inverts the paradigm and advises the "Amazons" (*Ars* 2.743, 3.1) how to win these battles themselves. Thus any idea of a specially charged relationship between one man and one woman totally disappears from view. The *Remedia* takes this reversal a step further, replacing the idea of an Art of Love with its opposite. Thus if the *Ars* challenges the central assumptions of love elegy, the *Remedia* virtually does away with them (Conte 1994, 35–65).

In the *Heroides* – love letters written as if by mythic heroines to their absent lovers – we find something more in keeping with conventional love elegy. But again the gender dynamics of the collection is crucially different. Here the lover speaks not with one, masculine voice but through a multiplicity of feminine personae. And these are not

fickle, untrustworthy *puellae*, but each is devoted to or even obsessed with an individual, often faithless man. Just as important if not more so, it is the women in love, not a man in love, who are represented as writing (Farrell 1998). Each of these elements reverses the norms of canonical elegiac poetry and of Roman literary culture itself. A second collection of *Heroides*, somewhat in the fashion of *Ars amatoria* 3, complicates matters further by representing *exchanges* of correspondence between various mythical couples (in each case a man writes to a woman who then replies). Both collections engage imaginatively with canonical elegy (Spoth 1992), but their material is that of mythological narrative and drama (Jacobson 1974) and their form is enormously indebted to the conventions of epistolography (Kennedy 1984). Much as the *Ars* and the *Remedia* adapt elegy to the conventions of didactic poetry, both collections of *Heroides* are ambitious experiments in generic hybridity.

It is interesting and significant that narrative becomes more and more prominent in Ovid's later work. In the *Heroides*, as I just mentioned, narrative and dramatic poetry provides much of the material for the first-person accounts of the various heroic women. The *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti* are themselves masterpieces of narratological bricolage. In this respect, they are both formally closer to canonical Greek elegy than to the genre of the *Amores*. Nevertheless, both poems are deeply informed by Roman elegiac convention. The *Metamorphoses* of course is not formally an elegiac poem at all but Ovid's one surviving poem in the epic meter. But connoisseurs of style understand that Ovid's epic is in many respects (diction, sentence structure, even some aspects of prosody) composed as if it were an elegiac poem (Knox 1986). Still, it is clear that the poem generates a lot of its energy from Ovid's ability to manipulate readerly expectations by his sophisticated negotiation of generic signals – particularly those of epic and elegy (Hinds 1986), although his approach is so radical that traditional conceptions of genre can hardly account for it (Farrell 1992).

Much the same thing can be said about the *Fasti*, which is in so many ways the twin of the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid composed both poems during the same period, and, while the *Metamorphoses* introduces itself as an epic departure from Ovid's predominantly elegiac career (Kovacs 1987), the *Fasti* demands to be read both as a return to and an adventurous expansion of the elegiac genre. The meter, once again, is elegiac, but this is a constant subject of anxious reflection because the poem's "weighty" subject matter – Roman history and religion, astronomical phenomena, the monumental fabric of the Augustan city – is (by convention) incompatible with or requires careful assimilation to the elegiac form (e.g. *Fast.* 1.1–8; 2.3–8, 119–26; 4.10; 6.21–22; Hinds 1992a).

This is hardly a canonical Roman elegy. Instead, it is aetiological narrative elegy – in effect, canonical Greek elegy – written in Latin (Miller 1982, 1991). The *Fasti* is closer in form to Callimachus' *Aetia* than anything else in Roman poetry. Like Callimachus, Ovid adopts the persona not of an *amator* or even a *praeceptor amoris*, but that of an elder *cicerone* who is well versed not in the ways of the heart but in the origins of certain cults and, especially, in the history of the calendar. Both poets question a number of interlocutors, including the Muses themselves. Both poems are substantial but highly episodic and are organized in pairs of books (two pairs in the *Aetia*, three in the *Fasti*). Ovid clearly designed the *Fasti* as a Roman counterpart to Callimachus' *Aetia*, and in this sense he produced the single Roman poem that best represents the form and the spirit of canonical Greek elegy (Wahlberg 2008).

Its relationship to canonical Roman elegy, however, is rather tenuous, or perhaps vestigial. The point is not that there are a few poems of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid's own *Amores* that anticipate the ritual focus of the *Fasti*: these predecessors do not make aetiological narrative a normative part of canonical Roman elegy. It makes more sense to view these efforts as occasional gestures towards the Greek genre. By contrast, Propertian aetiological elegy and Ovidian meta-elegiac poetry refer constantly both to their Greek models, with their focus on narrative, and to the norms of Roman love elegy, as well. They take for granted the idea that elegy is especially suited to be the vehicle for subjective reflections on love; and this is perhaps the main thing that distinguishes the *Fasti* from the *Aetia*, in which love, as I noted previously, is a theme but hardly the most important one. Thus the *Fasti* narrator eroticizes his material in order to make the matter fit the meter (Hinds 1992a). For these and other reasons the *Fasti* is better understood, like the *Metamorphoses*, not as a poem that belongs to the genre of elegy but as a virtuosic display of generic sophistication in which elegy is only one of the elements, and not in any obvious sense the principal one, that is on display.

After his relegation to Tomis, Ovid produced the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, which bear a similarly fascinating relationship to canonical elegy without being of it. Both collections are concerned with Ovid's plight and have as their goal to secure his recall to Rome or at least to some less distant place. The subject seems inherently un-elegiac. By virtue of their epistolary form, which is explicit in the *Epistulae ex Ponto* and implicit in most of the *Tristia*, these poems have a lot in common with the *Heroides*. And the *Ars amatoria* is a frequent theme in both collections (*Tr.* 2.8, 240, 251, 303, 345; 3.14.6; 5.12.68, *Pont.* 1.1.12; 2.2.104, 9.73, 76, 10.12, 11.2; 3.3.70). But if anything, these poems belong even more than the *Heroides* to the genre of epistolography. Their most obvious relationship to elegiac convention has not to do with love or with aetiology (although both of these themes are present in the collection: see Miller 2004, 210–36) but with the title of the *Tristia* – “Sorrows” – which alludes to elegy as a genre of lamentation, a conceit that carries through both collections, in which the exile poet presents his existence in Tomis as a form of living death. And Ovid's own career, including his identity as the poet of the *Amores*, is an important theme as well (although the *Ars*, which Ovid alleges was an important reason for his relegation, looms even larger). But to argue that the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto* can therefore be considered part of the elegiac canon would involve more than just special pleading.

In this respect we may include the *Ibis*, a curse poem that bears no obvious relationship to canonical Roman elegy but, like the *Fasti* and if anything even more so, is modeled on a specific poem of Callimachus, the chief poet of the Greek elegiac canon. It is as if Ovid, at the end of his career, had become a generic fundamentalist, moving beyond canonical Roman elegy in a way that takes him closer to canonical Greek elegy, and especially to Callimachus, than any Roman poet, in any genre, had ever come.

I hope I have shown why it is valid to consider the genre of Roman elegy from two perspectives. On the one hand, an expansive definition of the genre as one that embraces Catullus as well as Ovid's exile poetry, is certainly defensible. On the other, it seems to me difficult to come to terms with what I have called proto-elegy and meta-elegy until one comes to terms with the essentializing impulse of canonical Roman elegy – the poetry of (presumably) Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid in his *Amores*. It is here that the Romans truly called out the Greeks by creating out of inherited ingredients

something that was new and unparalleled. It was an achievement upon which they built in amazing ways, but it is also one that deserves to be understood in and of itself.

FURTHER READING

The central issues of this chapter are addressed in the context of ancient genre theory in Farrell 2003. For a fuller account of Greek elegy in the Hellenistic period see Murray 2010. On the essential aspects of canonical Roman elegy Kennedy 1993 is excellent. Miller 2004 takes a different approach to the definition of elegy as a genre: he considers Catullus an elegist in much the same sense as the poets of Quintilian's canon, and does not distinguish (as I have in this chapter) between canonical elegy and meta-elegiac poetry. Hunter 2006 is an incisive, up-to-date point of entry into the study of Callimachus' influence on Roman poetry. For the influence of Callimachean aetiological elegy, see Miller 1982, Miller 1991, and Wahlberg 2008. A number of factors that influenced the development of Ovid's career are discussed by Harrison 2002, Tarrant 2002, and Farrell 2004. On the various aspects of what I have called Ovid's meta-elegiac poetry see: (*Ars, Rem., Med.*) Conte 1994; (*Her.*) Kennedy 1984, Spoth 1992, Farrell 1998; (*Met.*) Knox 1986, Hinds 1986, Farrell 1992; (*Fasti*) Hinds 1986, 1992a, 1992b; (*Tr., Pont.*) Nagle 1980, Williams 1994; (*Ib.*) Williams 1996.

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CHAPTER 2

Catullus the Roman Love Elegist?

David Wray

Quintilian (10.1.93) and Ovid (*Tristia* 4.10.53–5) seem to think not. In a pair of regularly quoted passages, they agree on a list of four canonical Roman elegists: Gallus; Tibullus, whom Quintilian likes best, “for his special polish and elegance”; Propertius (some do like him better, Quintilian admits); and Ovid, who, writing from the long view of exile, could claim his own place on the roster without arrogance or false modesty. These two strong pieces of evidence urge the conclusion that just about any reader of Latin poetry in the early empire would have told you that Roman love elegy was a genre initiated by Gallus, the only one of the canonical four whose poems are all but entirely lost. And Catullus? Despite having been born only about fifteen years before Gallus, despite being one of the most carefully studied and imitated poets in later generations, and despite having written long poems in elegiac metre on love themes, Catullus, from the view on the ground, the view of Latinity itself, somehow seems not to have counted as a Roman love elegist.

Does this mean it is a mistake to describe him as one? The editor of an influential early twentieth-century American college textbook on the subject named Catullus as “the first Roman elegist whose works have endured to our own time” (Harrington 1914, 25) and included twenty-five of his poems as examples of the elegiac genre. A more recent editor of a similar textbook, updating Harrington for the millennium and writing at about the same temporal remove from him as separated Quintilian from Ovid, likewise includes Catullus in his list of “surviving erotic elegists” (Miller 2002, 2). Here the representative selection includes only one, or part of one, poem whose claim to the status of elegy looks unassailable, Poem 68B. Like Harrington before him, Miller rounds out his sampling of Catullus with a number of shorter pieces in elegiac metre taken from the final third of the corpus (Poems 69 through 116). These poems are all traditionally designated as epigrams, with one possible exception (Poem 76), and duly

recognized as such by both commentators. Are they also in some sense examples of elegy, as their inclusion seems to imply?

The seven shorter poems Miller anthologizes, freighted as they are with intense, complex, and characteristically Catullan emotions, do seem to press a claim to the status of miniature elegy, at least at the level of thematic content. Each of them however also manifests the formal pith, the drive toward neat encapsulation through symmetry and pointed antithesis, and above all the relative roughness of diction (Ross 1969) that distinguished Latin epigram, one of the most widespread and popular poetic genres of the language, from elegy. Latin elegy, conversely, was marked at the height of its development by an aristocratic disdain for linear progression at the level of theme coupled with a no less aristocratic commitment to relentlessly elegant polish at the level of diction. This latter quality, the mirror sheen of their exquisite surfaces, is what Quintilian picked out (in Tibullus especially) as a chief excellence of the Augustan love elegists. The former quality, the fuzzy logic of their propositional content (here again Tibullus leads the pack), is what makes them, for modern readers at least, often hard to construe for sense and even harder to come to grips with as poetry.

So does Catullus get to count as a Roman love elegist or not? On the one hand, we can acknowledge that Catullus gave the world some genuine examples of subjective-erotic elegy. Poems 65 and 66, a translation from Callimachus on Berenice's lock with a dedicatory letter, clearly belong in this category. And whether we count it as one poem or two, Poem 68, a shimmeringly intense poetic meditation in which the major emotional preoccupations of the Catullus we get to know throughout the corpus find their correlates in the heroic mythology of the Greeks, realizes so many of the potentials of love elegy so fully that it might feel odd to call it a mere precursor of the genre. Propertius and Ovid explicitly acknowledged Catullus as a formative model (Miller 2007). Their poetic practice, and Tibullus' as well, points to an apprenticeship that included diligent study not just of the full-length elegies but of everything Catullus wrote. The genres of Latin poetry, interrelated, were always open to influences from outside their own permeable generic boundaries, and all the surviving elegy collections have moments, for example, where they riff on the traditions of Roman epigram. Ovid even rewrites Catullus' unforgettable single-distich epigram *odi et amo* ("I hate and I love," Poem 85) in the first couplet of *Amores* 3.11b, and spends the rest of the poem amplifying it in a decidedly epigrammatic, if distinctly Ovidian, vein. For these reasons and others, Catullus has a place in the history of Roman love elegy, and studying that history involves studying more than just those two or three of his poems that come closest to being full-blown examples of the genre.

On the other hand are some strong reasons for saying that while Catullus did write poems that are properly called Roman love elegies, he did so without thereby becoming a Roman love elegist properly speaking. For one thing, the Roman love elegists, unlike Catullus, all shared the sense of a poetic commitment to devote their careers exclusively to writing in the elegiac form. This they seem to have allegorized in the claim to have devoted their lives to a sole and unique love object, a mistress (we owe this meaning of the word chiefly to Roman elegy [Wyke 2007]) whose beauty and faithlessness obsesses and torments them. Catullus does share with them the ethical claim to have devoted himself to a love object that both obsessed and disappointed him. But Lesbia, in the fictional world of Catullus' poetry, has always struck readers as a real person with specific

traits, at least too much so to serve merely or principally as an allegory for things like poetic writing, the genre of elegy, or the book of poems itself, as Cynthia so often does in Propertius. Further, within Latin poetry it is Catullus who has given us our great surviving example of restlessly experimental variety (what the Greeks called *poikilia*) at the level of form, through a very wide range of speech genres as well as metres and themes. By contrast, if Gallus, Tibullus, or Propertius ever wrote other kinds of poetry besides elegy, we do not know of it.

Ovid is of course the exception, since he went on to graduate from elegy into what he and his tradition regarded as more ambitious genres, starting with his (lost) tragedy *Medea*. And the characteristically Ovidian wit of the *Amores* can make his elegiac commitment look half-hearted, even inside the logic of that poetry collection's imagined world. More often than not, Ovid – whether that name refers to the lover inside the world of the poems or to the poet standing outside that world and making it – just seems to be having too much fun to count as obsessed and tormented. Still, even Ovid portrays himself at the opening of his elegiac collection as wounded by Love's arrow and bound by the god's cruel command to live only for love and write only elegy (*Amores* 1.1). Even more instructive in this regard is his depiction, at the beginning of his third and final book of “Loves,” of Elegy and Tragedy personified as female beings competing for his exclusive devotion and not satisfied until he promises serial monogamy to both (*Amores* 3.1). This scene, for all its wit, also clearly shows just how thoroughly Ovid could count on his contemporary readers to recognize, as a cultural given, an implicit but clear and striking claim about Roman love elegy as a poetic vocation, one with more than merely writerly implications for the poet called to it. Ovid is implying, and expecting his readers to understand, that being a Roman love elegist had come to mean something comparable on some level to what it meant in this culture to be a philosopher (Hadot 2002). That is to say, the choice to be a Roman elegist could be held up as not just a choice to mold written language under the constraints of a certain literary form on a given day, or to have a particular kind of poetic career, but rather a once-for-all decision, forced on the poet more than taken by him, to be a certain kind of human being and live a certain kind of life. Catullus, whose poetry gives as strong a sense of poetic vocation and poetic ambition as any poet who ever wrote, never hints that he thought of being a love elegist in this way or had even heard of the possibility of doing so.

Another salient difference between Catullus and the Augustan elegists, as I read their poetry, is that Catullus gives us more, by a wide margin, of what Paul Veyne (1988, 31–49) calls “classical illusion.” By this I mean the strong impression that the speaker of Catullus' poems is a man in the world, or at least a character in a realist drama, talking – maybe to someone else, maybe only to himself – but just talking, the way people talk in the world. While it may be hard to put a finger to the precise causes of this impression of directness and authenticity, the entire modern reception history of Catullus testifies to its power and presence. Extant Latin poetry offers no other reading experience that has felt to so many readers like the experience of getting close to another human being. No amount of talk on the part of us scholars about things like performativity and ironized self-presentation has yet succeeded in making Catullus walk that way for most of his readers, especially when coming to his poems for the first time.

By contrast, arguing hard for self-consciously performative artifice in Roman love elegy feels like belaboring the obvious. The speaker of a Roman elegiac poem is often as

hard to place in a world as a Senecan tragic protagonist. His words seem to travel through a medium that has all the viscosity and circularity of song, and very little of the transparently linear discursivity of talk. “Semiotic game” and “self-pastiche” are among the concepts Veyne (1988, 9, 28, and *passim*) famously, or infamously, applied to the discursive system of Roman love elegy and the self-presentation of its speakers. While finding much to disagree with in Veyne’s book, I also find these formulations taken by themselves so intuitively apt as descriptors of Roman elegy that the resistance they provoke in some Anglophone scholars leaves me puzzled and wondering if something got lost in translation. For Veyne, neither Catullus’ “sincerity” nor the elegists’ *jeu sémiotique* (*jeu* means “mechanism” as well as “game”) has anything to do with the measure of fidelity or fickleness in love we might impute to the poets or their poems’ speakers. What makes the Catullan speaker “sincere” in this sense more kin to Roland Barthes’ (1986) “reality effect,” and *ego* in Catullus’ poems is never so “sincere” as when he allows himself to be caught in a lie or an act of self-deception, as he often does. As for “semiotic game” and “self-pastiche,” I take it that Wheeler (1915, 157) had already put a (less threatening) finger on more or less the same generic features when he spoke of an “erotic system,” something he found only hinted at in Catullus but fully formed in the elegists, and noted that the elegiac speakers talk about themselves and their loves in an ironizing, objectifying tone that Catullus uses sometimes to talk about other men’s loves but never his own.

At least some of these are differences of degree rather than kind. Still, it may turn out that the sum of these contrasts at the level of literariness points to a deep underlying difference in the range of relations between fictional world and lived experience available to a given poet or set of poets. This is a claim that, if accepted, puts Catullus on the other side of a fairly bright line from the Roman love elegists and has a fair shot at being a general assertion about Latin literary history. To evaluate it, or begin to, more needs saying about the literary as well as the historical. Literary space feels like a realm apart, an element apart, from the space of mere language. If a signifying act in its instrumental, communicative use is like a physical object (a rock, say) surrounded by air, then the appearance of that signifying act in a literary utterance can be likened to the event of the rock being dropped into a pond. There is no end to the things we can find to say about the “physical object” constituted by a word-meaning-referent nexus located in the “air” of ordinary language use, just as there is no end to the “contextualizing” things a literary historian or philological commentator can find to say about the origins, properties, and interrelations of all the items in the world a literary text referentially points toward and incorporates. But once we set about describing the rock’s fall into the water, what takes center stage in our description, after the splash of initial contact, is the pond itself, the rhythmic surges pulsing through it as it works its way from the shock of excitation back to a state of relative calm. Developing the analogy, we can liken the concentric ripples across the water’s surface to the widening complex of metonymic associations that spread out from the point of (signifying) contact across a textual surface. And we can liken the zigzagging descent of the rock toward the pond’s bottom to the deepening complex of metaphoric significances psychically activated by the interaction of text and reader in the act of reading.

The analogy as set up is being asked to serve at least double duty, by describing what a poem might be doing and what reading the poem might be like for a reader. I want to

put it to yet a further service by holding it up alongside some elegiac verse texts of Catullus and Propertius, as a way of comparing and contrasting, if only in the limited way a sampling can achieve, these two poets' available modes of relation to the lived experience and the historical events their poems reference and imply. In both passages, the shock of excitation, the splash on the surface of the psychic pond that is the poem-world, comes from the displacement power of the one linguistic signifier on which the whole massive heft of history during the writing life of all the poets here under discussion can be said to have ridden: the name Caesar.

The verses of Catullus I have in mind stand as a complete poem. Decidedly an epigram by its theme and diction as well as its form, and admittedly a strange candidate on its face for comparison to Augustan love elegy, this elegiac distich is nonetheless one of the selections Harrington included in his anthology of Roman elegiac poetry (1914, 109):

Nil nimium studeo, Caesar, tibi uelle placere,
nec scire utrum sis albus an ater homo.

(Catullus, Poem 93)

I have no particularly eager wish to please you, Caesar,
or to know whether you are a white man or a black one.

As an utterance this is a choice example of what I have elsewhere called Catullus' "poetics of manhood": a conversation-stopping performance of outrageous verbal aggression that invites readers to enjoy and cheer it as such (Wray 2001). At the same time and above all it is a poem, and it does a poem's work, however quietly and unobtrusively, in a way that the pond analogy allows us to describe with a measure of adequacy. The shock of excitation that sets up the vibrational system of the poem has its center of gravity in the vocative *Caesar* lodged in the first line's metrical navel. This excitation, the poem implies, has its origin in an attempt, on Caesar's part or another's, to persuade or compel the speaker to adopt a willed (*uelle*), not feigned, resolve to accommodate his words and actions to Caesar's wishes. The process of working through that excitation, what the poem enacts, consists in the representation of a man groping for an appropriately zinging squelch to rebuff what he takes as an attempt to unman him into submission. The release of excitation that restores relative equilibrium comes from the speaker's victorious pleasure (and confidence that we will share it) in having produced from out of his linguistic community's cultural storehouse a received proverbial utterance that, in context, hits the bullseye of perfect aptness. Not knowing if a man is *albus an ater*, "white or black," as Cicero (*Philippics* 2.41) and other prose writers use the phrase, amounts to not knowing the first thing about him, not being able to predicate a single descriptor of him. By closing the epigram on this homely, prosy, but vigorous and vivid locution, the speaker responds to his own first-verse assertion, that he doesn't care in the least about cultivating a wish to please Caesar, in a way that pleurably subsumes, libidinally releases, that assertion into a broader claim, that Caesar stands outside the circle of persons the speaker has even the faintest wish to get to know or learn about.

Poem 93, while not very ambitious or impressive as a literary artifact and not very representative of its author's talent, is characteristic of Catullus' poetic practice in some

important specific and general ways. If we take a Latin elegiac poem as a literary artifact susceptible of being read as the representation of a subjective “working through” of the problem of a painfully exciting stimulus, then it is fair to say that Catullus’ characteristic mode of working through consists in working his way to a sharp point and using it to jab hard. Leaf through the corpus and see how many Catullus poems you think end with a line that packs a punch, hones the point of an aggressively purposive linear rhetorical thrust. The dedicatory epistle, Poem 1, closes on a poet’s stark bid for his book’s immortality: “may it last, perennial, longer than an age” (*plus uno maneat perenne saeclo*, 1.10). The more famous of the two kiss poems, Poem 5, ends by encapsulating its speaker’s boastful expression of a gargantuan appetite for kisses inside an expression of the hope that his stratagem of mixing up the tally of kisses will prevent an enemy’s envious evil eye from taking effect, “should he come to know how many our kisses are” (*cum tantum sciat esse basiorum*, 5.13). The equally famous Poem 11, delivering its speaker’s bitter message of dismissal to a lover proved false, closes on a literal cut inside an unforgettable figure. When he likens his love to a flower that falls after “it has been touched by the plow” (*tactus aratro est*, 11.24), the speaker has plowed his own utterance straight down its furrow to an untoppable and unanswerable closure, by hitting on a poem-final phrase that manages to nail, with overweening aptness, no fewer than three things at once: the steely brutality of the heartlessness he imputes to his beloved; the slashing intensity of his own retaliatory anger; and the wilting pathos of the self-pitying aggrievement that underlies that anger as the source and secret principle of it, and that a psychologically subtle poet lets us discern through and beneath the words of his poem’s speaker.

Again, what I am describing is a matter of degree, and Catullus in his elegiac writing does have less the feel of an aggressively linear plowing toward a pointed thrust than my own reading, at least, finds in the shorter poems of the first and last thirds of the corpus. But even Catullus’ longer elegiac poems manifest a level of classical discursive linearity and realism of presence, a sense of a talking voice, that set them distinctly apart from what I am calling the circularity and liquid viscosity of song. This latter pair of qualities are a large part of what gives the love elegies of the Augustans their special feel and mood. They bespeak a markedly different situatedness not just in their imagined world but also the world inhabited by their poets.

The lines of Propertius I have chosen to set alongside Poem 93 deliver, like Catullus’ poem, a message to Caesar (by way of Maecenas, the poem’s direct addressee) consisting in a refusal to give him what he is presumed to want. The Caesar in question is of course a different man living in a different world. The refusal, no less different, takes its place in the long tradition of *recusatio*, or programmatic refusal to compose a full-length heroic epic. For Propertius this was a tradition that stretched, through the “proem in the middle” (Conte 1992) that opens Virgil’s sixth Eclogue, back to that passage’s direct model in the prologue to Callimachus’ *Aetia*, and from there back to Hesiod’s encounter with the Muses at the start of the *Theogony*. Yet Propertius’ refusal, while taking its place within the *recusatio* tradition, sits in it oddly, to say the least:

sed neque Phlegraeos Iouis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conueniunt duro praecordia uersu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen auos.

nauita de uentis, de tauris narrat arator,
 enumerat miles uulnera, pastor ouis;
 nos contra angusto uersamus proelia lecto:
 qua pote quisque, in ea conerat arte diem.
 laus in amore mori: laus altera si datur uno
 posse frui: fruar o solus amore meo!
 si memini, solet illa leuis culpae puellas
 et totam ex Helena non probat Iliada.
 (Propertius 2.1.39–50)

But neither would Callimachus intone, from his slender chest,
 the Phlegraean roils of Jove and Enceladus,
 nor are my own lungs fit, in steely verse,
 to set down Caesar's name among his forbears.
 A sailor's tales are of winds, a plowman's of steers,
 the soldier counts his wounds, the shepherd his sheep;
 my business is battles that rage in a slender bed:
 let each consume his day in what art he can.
 Dying in love is something to praise, another is being granted
 to enjoy a one and only: O let me alone enjoy my love!
 If I remember right, she often dispraises fickle girls
 and dislikes, on Helen's account, the entire *Iliad*.

Odd enough already, though not the oddest thing here, is that the poem's speaker could hardly have hit on a fulsomer message of praise to send Caesar's way than the one implicitly encoded in his outward withholding of praise. In comparing himself to Callimachus, the speaker sets up a complex analogy that maps Rome's new *princeps* onto the monarch of Olympus, likening his long and bloody march toward one-man rule through Philippi and Actium (and politics and propaganda) to the mythological battle of gods and giants that ended with cosmic rebellion quelled and the establishment of Jupiter's Olympian rule. The poem by this point has already situated itself in the historical moment of its own composition by rehearsing the names of those two great civil battles, among others. And "the allegorical use of Gigantomachy to allude to Augustan supremacy" (Hardie 1983, 312), especially in the context of a *recusatio*, puts Propertius squarely in the company of Virgil and Horace, in whose poems that mythological theme is a recurring motif. So far, then, by his range of historical and mythological reference, by his declaration of allegiance to Callimachean poetics, and by the always potentially ambivalent gesture of *recusatio*, Propertius, we can say, looks as characteristically and thoroughly Augustan as it was possible for a Roman poet to look.

If we look back at Catullus' Poem 93 from the vantage point of these lines of Propertius, what stands out starkest in these two poetic messages of refusal addressed to two different Caesars is the fierce outspokenness of Catullus' speaker in contrast to the sly indirection of Propertius'. The contrast is one that still holds true by and large, I find, when its terms are expanded to take in the entire Catullan corpus on one side and what survives of Augustan love elegy on the other. And once we view these two sets of poetic utterance together at the distance of a synoptic view, it feels frankly artificial not to consider the ways in which the historical and political circumstances of their composition may plausibly

be thought to have conditioned their different modes of poetic voicing and fictive worldmaking. Instead of or in addition to describing the modes of psychic energy represented in Catullus' poems in terms of cultural and anthropological concepts like performative self-fashioning and poetics of manhood, we might describe them, for example, in terms of a combination of political and psychological theory derived from Aristotle. Viewed from this perspective, what becomes salient in Catullus' outrageousness is not its performativity – which after all explains nothing by itself, if all human social behavior has an element of performance to it – but rather the fact that, excessive as the Catullan speaker's outbursts are, they consistently manifest the excess of a thing that, once modulated and matured, could look a lot like the republican virtue of spiritedness. The man Catullus' poems make us think we are getting to know is one who voices his feelings with the heraldic intensity of an aristocratic spirit that brooks no constraint because it has never been broken, never been taught to curb or dissemble its passionate nature across the whole range of human emotion, from love to hate, from joy to grief, from anger to fear and shame. The seat and wellspring of the Catullan speaker's emotional life seems in this regard to function a lot like the *thumos* of a Homeric hero (Casswell 1990, Koziak 1999), albeit in the unhomeric social setting of an urban metropolis.

The represented subjectivity of Propertius' speaker, by contrast, is pretty clearly that of an imperial citizen-subject, for more reasons than the obvious fact of his submission to an autocratic ruler enacted in verbal kowtows that presumably would have sickened a Roman man like the one who speaks the poems of Catullus. Modern readers, as citizens of liberal democracies, have often responded with revulsion and condemnation to what looks like servile flattery of Augustus on the part of Augustan poets, especially Virgil and Horace. Latinists for the most part now tend instead (unless they are open apologists for empire) to come to the rescue of the poets they value by finding ambivalence in their political sentiments, through a hermeneutic teasing out of veiled resistance and resentment beneath the surface of their apparent encomia. If both positions are understandable, neither feels fully satisfying. The act of damning those poets who thrived under an empire has always afforded the reliable pleasure of righteous indignation. Perhaps it is predicated on a confidence in political institutions that is hard to summon in times when modernity looks like a thing of the past. In the specific case of the Augustan poets, perhaps it constitutes a failure not just of empathy but also of historical imagination, a distaste for thinking and feeling one's way into the lived experience of a generation of poets formed not just by Callimachus and Catullus but also by civil wars, proscriptions, and massacred towns: a generation making poems in a world with no recourse to an "international community," no escape but death, and governed by a power that, while it might give any of its subjects cause for pride and optimism or at least relief, had also procured the suicide of the eldest of the canonical love elegists and would exile the youngest.

I have quoted more couplets than scholars usually do when referencing this first example of a *recusatio* in the poems of Propertius (see e.g. DeBrohun 2003, 5). The complexity of the passage does make its unity easy to miss. But when the speaker gets around to referencing by name the epic of all epics, he turns out to have been, all along, on the same subject as when he was aligning himself with Callimachus' refusal to try his hand at songs of kings and battles. In terms of the pond analogy, we can locate the rock-irritant whose impact breaks the pond-text's surface tension in the pressure to write Caesarian-Homeric epic, a persuasive or compelling force experienced by the speaker as coming

from someone outside himself and his love relation's community of two. And we can say that the rock is still scuttling across the floor of the pond, the shock of excitation still being metabolized throughout its vibrational system, all the way to the point where the speaker finds a way to reframe his resistance toward that external (or projected) urge as a lover's declaration of lifelong fealty – a wheedling, masochistic, needy, manipulative declaration, and one that presents a sphinx-like opacity to the question of its speaker's own precise level of self-complicity – directed at someone or something he calls simply “she” (*illa*). By this reframing, he seems almost to have recast his utterance as an act that takes place in a world inhabited only by two, or no more than two.

It is not easy to account, at least not by the logic of waking consciousness, for the process by which the Propertian speaker manages to digest and naturalize his refusal to please Caesar into an event in the drama cycle of his love relation. Tempting as it might be to invoke the logic of dreams, this all too easy solution is inadequate as well (here and elsewhere) in that it fails to respect things like alertness of wit and elevated rhetorical tone. Those characteristic elegances of Roman love elegy serve here as the chief motors driving the passage forward, or rather downward and back to the obsessive kernel to which the discourse of the genre recurs. The middle pair of couplets (line 43 ff.) seems at first to launch off in a new direction with a single-couplet priamel on different subjects of talk (and poetry) that correspond to different walks of life. But when the speaker resolves his foresong into a claim of predilection for the life (and poetics) of love, he does so in language that, while metaphorizing sex acts as “battles” (*proelia*) fit for heroic commemoration, also metonymically links his slender bed (*angusto ... lecto*) to the slender chest (*angusto pectore*) of Callimachus. The bed of love is thus not only ethicized by being held up as a walk of life on a par with farming or sailing, aestheticized by the application of a descriptor redolent of Callimachean and Neoteric exquisiteness (sheathed in the aggression of its insolent claim to take self-satisfaction in impoverishment), and heroized by the likeness of sexual congress to clash of arms, it is also figurally raised in dignity from the status of a piece of furniture to that of a cognitive and affective faculty, a living and singing sense-organ, through a kind of spiritualization of its function as the physical site of erotic acts and a resonant container of surging, pulsing, poem-making energies.

This figural complex is a familiar one, in which poetry and love are made each to figure the other, with the heroic economy of death in war and glory in epic serving as the third term of comparison. It has already been activated in similar terms earlier in the poem, when the speaker boasted of long naked wrestling bouts with the beloved in which “we set down (i.e. ‘compose’ or ‘found’) long Iliads” (*longas condimus Iliadas*, 2.1.14). When he returns to it here, on the far side of *recusatio*, he presses the point still deeper. The following couplet's ethical assertions (lines 47–8) offer a kind of lover's credo framed in a fiercely rhetorical tricolon that comes close to tracing an instance of what philosophers call the practical syllogism, a picture in words of the soul's passage to action. If “dying in love” (orgasm is one referent here, but not the only one) is praise(worthy), then the lover's pleasure can match the warrior's honor in valuation, and a Paris is not outdone in glory by an Achilles (or an Antony by an Augustus?). But if dying a lover's death is a commendable *telos*, then a life organized by that *telos*, through a steadfast devotion to – or more precisely a steadily reliable enjoyment of – a one and only, must necessarily participate in that same commendability as well. And so, rounding out the syllogism: “O let me alone enjoy my love!” The couplet's fierce rhetoric is no less fiercely

songful: the anaphora of *laus* marks the movement from the first premise to the second; the anadiplosis with polyptoton of *frui/fruor* stands at the threshold of the third; and the echo of *amore mori* in *amore meo* rings home what was to be proven, namely the equivalency asserted by the lover, with pressing urgency (*O!*), between a hero's beautiful death and a lifelong access to the beautiful satisfaction of his own pressing want.

Before we pass to the final couplet of the passage, a moment of stocktaking. The figural moves executed by Propertius in these dozen lines are, on the one hand, sufficient by themselves to exemplify the operation of a "semiotic game" in Roman love elegy, comparable in many ways to the "erotic system" of the courtly religion of love that passes from the troubadours, through poets like Dante and Petrarch, into the poetic (and popular song) traditions of the modern European languages. It is love, these poets sing, that confers worth and honor on a human life; yet love is madness and pain; and yet that pain is sweeter by far than any pleasure. These and similar tenets of love's religion, rules of its game, are perhaps so familiar to us, so conventional, that we take note of their presence or absence in a given poetic discourse of love only by a special effort of attention. But the figural systems that pervasively and specifically mark Roman love elegy – like love's servitude and soldiery, and like the wordplay on *Amor/amor* that promotes desire (and its object) to the status of a ruling, besetting, triumphantly commanding divinity – are either absent entirely from Catullus' poetry, or present only in embryonic germ, or foisted ironically onto other people, like Poem 45's Septimius and Acme (with Amor sneezing approbation left and right). However complex, however painful the feelings he conveys, the speaker of Catullus' poems, compared to the elegists, never stops doing just that: speaking, in a relatively contained, if often impassioned, tone of wakeful ego-consciousness – hovering, of course, over a ground of represented psychological depth (the "classical illusion" in action) – that never stops drawing in readers and making them want to be friends with Catullus. It is in this sense that the bluntness, the pure speakerliness, with which he blows off Caesar in Poem 93 can be called paradigmatic of his entire oeuvre. Catullus, in a moment of intense feeling, may compare himself to a nightingale, by talking about one, albeit in exquisite verse. We could say that the Augustan elegists, by contrast, are trying to sing like one, trying to voice intensities that go beyond the human, and not just at the level of form.

On the other hand, if we make the attempt to pierce the elegiac figural system, it is also possible to hear, in the words of Propertius we have read so far, and the thoughts and feelings they croon, a particular kind of zany boyishness, exquisite and brutal, that marks their genre as well. This too represents a set of qualities that Catullus, for all his thousands of kisses, never approaches. The situation these lines, and most of the verses of Roman love elegy, imaginatively conjure is that of a relation between an elite young man, tenderly raised and brilliantly talented (not unlike Catullus) and a woman who (very unlike Lesbia) is of a kind the young man would never under any circumstance marry. Both parties, as we are invited to picture them, have every interest in complexifying the nature of their relation so that it escapes looking like a mere exchange of payment for services, or even of gifts for attention, though the young man may sometimes hurl this latter construction in the woman's face as a reproach, especially when her door is locked and she is behind it with another man. Their reasons for keeping the high drama stoked and thereby maintaining the complexified model of their relation are of course different on the two sides, as the elegists allow us to glimpse (and James 2003 brings into clear

focus). What makes their reasons different, we might say, is that they have to do with different kinds of power and different kinds of want. But their reasons also overlap, and are also at least potentially complicated on both sides by things like feelings, and the elegists let us see this as well. In our own therapeutic vernacular, we might call their relation codependent. In the more precise terminology of a post-Freudian psychoanalytic model like Heinz Kohut's self-analysis, we could say that the elegiac speaker casts his beloved in the role of a selfobject – an external object experienced by the deficient self as necessary to its own functioning as a self – while bringing to the relation a modality of wanting that Kohut would call (in his specialized sense) narcissistic, in that it partakes of the untamed grandiosity of infantile need (Kohut 1971).

Returning now to the Propertian speaker at the penultimate couplet quoted, we can say that his soul's passage to action, the resolution of his practical syllogism, consisted precisely in his pentameter-splitting "O!": an exclamatory expulsion of breath bodying forth what a medieval scholastic would call an "act of love" (*actus amoris*). What the action of his sigh was hankering after was the assurance of ever-ready access to intimacy with an always available selfobject, through a communion so intense as to blur the boundary between self and other, life and death, by drowning need and the self's perception of itself as needy in ecstasy. When we arrive at the final couplet, however, something new has happened. The speaker, as if suddenly feeling the sting of mortified narcissism upon catching a glimpse of his own abject neediness and the utter impossibility of that need's getting fed anywhere, least of all in the situation he has procured for himself, has now passed from breathing a lover's sigh to mounting a kind of preemptive strike on his love's object. This he achieves through an act of wit-driven passive-aggressive manipulation that deserves to be called sublime for two separate but related sets of reasons.

First, by resorting to the fictional (whether really experienced or no) memory of some literary critical remarks about the *Iliad* made in passing (or never) by a woman who is (or is not) referenced by the name Cynthia in Propertius' poems, the elegiac speaker recharacterizes his generically-determined abnegation of Homeric epic, and all the modes of manly efficacy for which it stands, as his own sacrificially faithful maintenance of a love pact, a predated contract in which *he* agrees to eschew the Homeric and remain forever elegiac because *she* dispraises Homer, on account of Helen's fickleness. The *puella's* dispraise of Homer and the ethical condemnation of infidelity that motivates it are thereby deemed by the speaker to have had, all along, the value of sworn and solemn entry into that contract. In other words, he has aggressively recast a real or imagined stated literary opinion on her part as an implicit promise to compensate his status as an elegiac lover whose beautiful soul stands apart from all things heroic – the irresistible charm, that is, of his infantile dependence – with a steady stream of faithful love in the idealized maternal mode of constant and exclusive availability.

Striking as this bid for preoedipal bliss in union appears, even more striking is the fact that it remains always open to being read as a sally of wit engineered to raise a smile on the faces of his addressees both inside and outside the poem's world. This crucial move is characteristically elegiac as well. By risking the exposure of so intimate a need to cold laughter while hinting that his bid for that need's satisfaction might, even in the logic of the poem, all be based on a wishful lie ("if I remember right"), he appears, on one view, to be adding the spice of masochistic thrill to the sweetness of the (impossible) bliss he envisions. At the same time, by casting this cry for the fulfillment of a need beyond desire

in the apparent form of an amusing stroke of urbanity, he has reserved for himself an out, an alibi, a guaranteed access to full deniability. The Roman love elegists have an iron-clad defense against any reader so importune as to take seriously what they say about the horrors of love. Catullus had found himself in the position of hurling the foulest threats of sexual aggression against readers who had put a finger to his tenderness as a lover and pronounced it unmanly. That is a position from which the elegists were protected (and barred) by all the perfections that made them, in the literary sense, Augustan: a perfection of hauteur and poise founded on the confidence of a poetic tradition whose language and forms had ripened (thanks to poets like Catullus) into a fullness of perfection and prestige that, in turn, both befigured and rested on the perfect imperial dominion those poet-subjects enjoyed and suffered. In this sense, the subject position of the Roman elegist is one around which the (new and improved) patriarchal power of his historical moment is ever ready to close ranks and keep his stance of perfect helplessness perfectly unassailable.

The second aspect of sublimity in this final couplet, with its intricate projection of an ethical disapproval of Homeric epic onto the speaker's love object, is simpler to name. It cuts to the heart, the traumatic kernel, of Roman love elegy and defines it as a genre, at least in terms of its speaker's subject position. It is what chiefly makes this poetry a treasure of world literature and a predecessor to the great love poetry traditions of the European languages. By recharacterizing his (however ambivalently) submissive refusal to Caesar and grand disavowal of Homeric song – by reframing, that is, the Callimachean *recusatio* that grounds his entire project, his poetic vocation and ambition – as an act of (however aggressively) submissive fealty by which he hopes to assure the continuance of a love relation that remains as hopeless, and as cruelly humiliating, as it is endless, the elegiac speaker declares himself not only a faithful follower of the religion of love but also a knower of the truth that love is a force more hostile to us, more inhuman, than death. It is this knowledge, of which he is master and teacher, that gives him the sense of himself as simultaneously, and to a sublime degree in both directions, heroic and degraded. Further, by flaunting (he cannot flaunt it enough) the miserable tawdriness of the relation he may never achieve and must always ache for, and by broadcasting in every poem the “written” (Wyke 1987), the “manufactured” (Sharrock 1991) insubstantiality of the (no) one he lacks, he declares his commitment to make poetry that is as monstrous as love itself.

Obsessive recursion to unbearable lovepain unquenched is elegy's burden and theme. Elegy's form – the droned and intoned liturgical monody of its ebb and flow, the mercilessly elegant sheen and tinkle of its semiotic gearworks – serves as a soundboard and receptacle for psychic energies too searing for ego consciousness and language to contain. Catullus, whether he is being a nice guy or a mean one, writing in whatever poetic form, whether he is exuberantly joyful in love or disappointed in love or just plain sick of love, never crosses the line into elegy in this sense, never stops talking his feelings with the psychological consistency and cohesion we like to think we have, and that we love Catullus for making us think maybe we do have. It is true that he approaches the elegiac position, in this sense, in places like the moment of fulgurous epiphany in Poem 68 when Lesbia's foot flashes across the threshold (68.70–2), and it is true that moments like these, at least as much as his formal achievements, make Catullus a genuine predecessor and prototype for the Augustan love elegists. But it is also true that he stops very far shy

of elegy's potential for enacting the horror of erotic obsession. Catullus shows us a lover taking himself seriously with the perfect seriousness of adolescent manhood, and he depicts that modality of desire with a sunlit intensity that never cloys. The Roman love elegists perfected the art of not taking themselves seriously as lovers to a degree that allowed them to sound the archaic depths of the thing in love that is deeper than desire, and to put sung words to its terrible wisdom.

FURTHER READING

Catullus' poems are quoted here from Mynors' 1958 Oxford Classical Text, Propertius' from Fedeli's 2006 Teubner. Translations are my own. For further reading on Roman love elegy (beyond the sources mentioned in this chapter), Luck 1959 is still the best introduction to the history and prehistory of the genre. Lyne 1980 describes in fuller detail than the present chapter the ways in which Catullus set a precedent for the "life of love" that elegy depicts, and is overall an excellent study of Latin love poetry. Greene 1998 offers a feminist, Miller 2004 a Lacanian, reading of Roman love elegy. Major literary studies of Catullus' entire oeuvre include Quinn 1972 and Fitzgerald 1995, while Skinner 2003 draws a richly imaginative setting for the composition of his longer poems.

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CHAPTER 3

Propertius

W. R. Johnson

The Meanings of Cynthia

Inside my carnal youth
My will to Poetry was being shaped
And mapped out were the outlines of my Craft.
(Cavafy)

The moment that Apuleius identified the elegiac poets' objects of desire he gave warrant to their readers to view their love poems as representations of their actual romantic experience, inviting these readers, century after century, to supply (imagine) verisimilar details that the poet's erotic autobiographies had been stingy with. (For a good discussion of Apuleius' "identifications," see Keith 2008, 88.) Thus as Catullus' Lesbia was revealed to have been Clodia in actual life, so Propertius' Cynthia was unmasked and identified as Hostia. In the present as in the past, for some readers who are mostly indifferent to the lives of the poets and primarily concerned with the pleasure of poems themselves (or their rhetorical engines), the actualities thought to be concealed behind these fictive names hold little interest. But for many readers, those enchanted by Dante's Beatrice and Petrarch's Laura, by Shakespeare's Young Gentleman and his Dark Lady, and by Keats' Fanny and Yeats' Maud, fiction and fact are inextricably entwined, and, if fact is removed from them, the love poems seem divested of their life's blood and wither into mere literature.

Today's pendulum has swung away from this seductive prejudice, and the current fashion, with plenty of evidence and commonsense to fuel it, tends to distrust "actuality" and to favor "textuality." The current fashion rightly reminds us that, for the most part,

poetry is made out of words, most especially out of the words (and clichés) that poets borrow from other poets, both living and dead, and that they then transmute into their own unique idiom; it further insists we recognize that, however much a poet may seem to draw on his own experience, the construction of poetry relies primarily on literary conventions and on poetic imagination which combine to transform mere personal experience into something that looks like, reminds us of, realities, but is in fact something richer, stranger and possessed of far greater clarity and order than anything we are often likely to experience in our real lives. (The seminal essay for this perspective is Wyke's; see also Miller 2004, 61–6) Propertius's Cynthia, then, may have been a real woman whom he really loved (and lost, or rejected or was rejected by); or she may be a sort of collage of various women with whom he shared erotic joys and griefs; or she may be a textual contraption, cobbled together from the women that other love poets had loved or invented. Or she may, in fact, be a peculiar amalgam of all these possibilities. But whatever she was when Propertius sat down to write her she is, for her contemporary readers, primarily an imaginative representation of what Propertius thought and felt about the society he lived in, about the nature of the erotic experience as he and his contemporaries conceived of it and experienced it, about what he thought concerning the nature and function of poetry, and, perhaps most crucially, what he thought about the meaning of his role as poet, about his poetic calling.

The source of that calling is mysterious. Using the older, more traditional template, one could imagine that Propertius was essentially a lover, and it was for this reason that he chose (or was compelled) to write love poetry: being a lover and wanting to write, he had to write about what he knew best – until, as we will shortly see, for one reason or another (like falling out of love?), he abandoned love poetry and turned his attention to other topics. More likely is the fact that he grew up towards the end of a sort of revolution in erotic behavior in Rome, a revolution that was reflected in and abetted by the love poetry of several generations of Roman poets in the first century B.C.E. (beginning with Catullus and Calvus and ending with Propertius' literary heir, Ovid). Briefly, that revolution had its origins in a fragmentation of social institutions that took place while its political institutions were being demolished; at the core of the erotic ideology that fueled this revolution was a profound distrust of and an increasing indifference to traditional ideas about sex and marriage and family values that had obtained in Rome for most of its known history. Those ideas centered on the procreation of Roman citizens (and soldiers) and the economic and moral stability of the Roman people. The new, emerging ideology was centered on a promiscuous celibacy that thrived on abundant divorces and prolific adultery and that even had some room for same-sexual diversions. In short: during this extended era, the patriarchy – as occasionally happens – was experiencing presentiments of cracks in its foundations.

Whatever Propertius' personal erotic code, this revolution and the genre of love elegy that incarnated it in words was a nice fit for a young man from the provinces with a taste for life in the city, one who seems to have liked to amuse himself by irritating the patriarchy and who was possessed of more than a little talent for sarcasm and satire.

Putting aside for a moment the figure of Cynthia, which is primarily compounded of the poet's responses to her incomparable beauty, her amazing vitality, and, above all, her capacity to fascinate and madden her poet by virtue of her limitless variety and the baffling spectrum of her caprices and moods, let us first examine Cynthia as a textual

creature, as a generic construction, as an assemblage of the conventions of love poetry as these offered themselves to Propertius when he undertook to write his love poems. At the outset of the opening poem of Book 2 he categorically states that his poetry, his love poems, his *amores*, utterly depend on the woman (or the idea) he calls Cynthia: *non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo:/ ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*, 1.3–4. It is not Calliope, here symbolizing all the Muses, and it is not Apollo himself, not even Apollo, leader of the Muses and the god of Poetry, who have made Propertius a poet: it is his girl alone, who has created his talent (better, genius) for him. It is Cynthia who made a poet out of him. This admission or claim is emphatically repeated in poem 2B, 30, where he specifically refutes the criticisms of old men who appeal to antique codes of behavior (*antiquis legibus*, 15) to condemn the boisterous partying (*convivia*, 13) of the poet and his sweetheart (*vita*, 14). The poet is not ashamed to live faithfully, not with one wife, but with a single friend (*amica*, 23). Whatever old men and their outmoded laws may say, if what the poet and his girl are doing is criminal, it is a crime of love, hence, no crime at all: *hoc si crimen erit, crimen Amoris erit*, 24. At this point in his poem, the poet promises to whisk his girl away from censorious Rome to an artificial (yet to him very real) paradise, a dewy cave tucked away in mossy hills, where the Muses are singing the loves of Jupiter (Semele and Io). (For another version of the poet's poetic hideaway, see 3.3.27–52) And if the Father of gods and men cannot withstand the arrows of Eros, who can? And if that is the case, why should Propertius be singled out for condemnation of a crime that is common to all? (This sly self-defense, everybody's doing it, will be richly elaborated by Ovid in his *Tristia* 2. See Johnson 2009, 137–44) But lest Cynthia should feel embarrassed to find herself suddenly in the presence of the Virgin Muses, the poet reminds her that at least one of them (Calliope) was once deflowered and became thereby the mother of Orpheus. So, when she feels more at home among the Muses, Cynthia will find herself leading them, and then, with Bacchus among them, Propertius will be crowned with ivy, triumphant among poets, and all because of Cynthia: *nam sine te nostrum non valet ingenium*, 40. "Without you my talent is worthless."

The testament to Cynthia's essential role in creating the poet's genius and generating his poems that opens Book 2A is powerfully reprised in the closing poem of Book 2B, where Propertius examines the nature of love poetry and proudly asserts his place among his predecessors in love elegy. (For a succinct explanation of the reasons for dividing Book 2 into Book 2A and 2B, see Heyworth 2007, x–xi, 152, 156–8) He and Cynthia follow in the footsteps of Varro and his Leucadia, of Catullus and Lesbia (whom he had made more famous than Homer's Helen), of Calvus and his Quintilia, and, finally, of Gallus and his Lycoris (2B 34.85–92). *Cynthia quin vivet versu laudata Properti,/ hos inter si me ponere Fama volet*, 93–4. "Yes, and praised in my poems, Cynthia too will be eternized, if only Fame permits me to join the ranks of the poets who went before me." If in these verses the poet seems to slip into the Apuleian mode and suggest that the love objects of his predecessors were actualities, the weight of his claim to belong to the sacred band of Roman love poets is unquestionably on the literary meaning of the poems that had served as his primary models for his poems about Cynthia. It is the poets (or better, their poems), not their women (real or imaginary) that matter: whatever their ontological status, factual or fictive, the women exist for the sake of the poetry (though without them, without the themes and language and images they bring with them – to the poet's desk and perhaps to his bed – the poetry would not exist).

Cynthia, then, like her models, is essentially an idea that turns into a poem (or a text, if you like), and it is as an idea, even if she was somehow a woman who turned into an idea, that she attains much of her meaning and not a little of her power to enchant in individual poems.

But Cynthia's links with textuality do not end with her role as heiress of poetic convention and, as such, as begetter of Propertius' poetic genius.

The other erotic heroines of love elegy, whatever other traits they share with Cynthia, seem bereft of an interest in literature and of poetic taste and judgment. But Cynthia is a *docta puella* (2A 11.6), which will in fact be the epitaph for her grave); at 2.13A 11ff. we learn that the poet enjoys lying in the lap of his learned girl, reading her his poems and basking in her praise of them, able to ignore the carping of his detractors as long as she approves of them; (see also 2B 24.21); at 2B 26 25f, we are told that whenever she recites his poems to him she pronounces her hatred of his rich rivals, and he asserts that he finds that no girl feels such reverence for the poetic art as she does; finally, in a witty moment (2B 33.35–8), a very drunk Cynthia, her garlands askew and falling into her wine cup, is not so sozzled that she cannot recite the poet's verses in a slurred voice – and the poet finds her beautiful even, or especially, then.

She is not merely literate, then: she has a special fondness for poetry and (as luck would have it) a genuine admiration for the poetry of Propertius. This connection with poetry in general and the poet's poetry in particular complicates the varied materials from which Cynthia is constructed. At times, she seems a high-class hooker whereas at others she seems just an ordinary slut, with no thought in her head but where the next john and his cash were coming from. When this latter notion takes possession of his mind, textual Cynthia becomes not just a book but a dirty book, one that has given him a really bad reputation: "People are talking about you, and you are becoming a laughing stock (*fabula*) because your "Cynthia" is being read all over the forum," 2B.24 1–2): this unexpected consequence he decides to squirm his way out of by living up to his bad name (*nequitiae caput*, 6) and, by becoming thoroughly promiscuous, insuring that he will never again be labeled as the neurotic, obsessive lover of a rotten woman. Here Cynthia is an evil text, but for the most part elsewhere (until the closing poems of Book 3) she is what inspires his writing and what gives it its purpose as well as its glitter and its verve and its sustained force. She is the idea of pure (and impure) passionate eroticism, of the world well lost for love (or lust). And that idea was the core of his poetry, which, so far as one can judge, was what he lived for.

In his Book 1 (the *Monobiblos*), though Propertius devotes some attention to other matters, among them alternate pursuits (which he rejects, firmly and wittily), Cynthia easily dominates the poet and his poems. In Books 2A and 2B, where she is ubiquitous, she gradually takes on what will be her perfected representation. In Book Three, for reasons we will be presently examine, she finds herself competing for the poet's attention with other pressing concerns but still manages to intrude herself into over a third of the poems in his penultimate volume before being cast into outer darkness in its closing poems, 3.24 and 25. (See Keith 2008, 186n6; Johnson 2009, 92) Out of these many and varied pictures of Cynthia, a composite image of her that I form (granting that different readers will form their images of her in different ways) displays a complexity that is rare in the other extant elegists.

She is indeed a textual construct, the product of a powerful generic code, but she is also an impressive incarnation of the erotic fashion of her poet's time – that is to say, she more nearly represents a reality than do the multiple and dim beloveds of Tibullus or Ovid's cardboard Corinna. And more even than Lesbia, she radiates an erotic verisimilitude that invites autobiographical speculations and misreadings. She triumphs as a textual construct *because* of the minute particulars that combine to confirm her as a genuine inhabitant of the poet's imagined erotic paradise (and hell). Propertius could supply both her and his imagined self with the necessary and proper erotic details because he was intrigued by the complexities and ambiguities of the new eroticism that fuelled his imagination and gave him a poetic mission that suited his talents and his temperament.

For Propertius (and for us) textual Cynthia means Poetry, Love Poetry, but she also means a free eroticism, a way of expressing one's sexuality that was not prescribed by traditional moralities, a way of remaking one's (male) identity that ran counter to the traditional techniques for the formation of the male identity. (See McDonnell 2006, 165–205) The Propertian lover is not a husband and not a father, nor is he cursed with that patriarchal temper, so revered in the past, one of whose chief obligations is to keep control of one's women (wives, daughters, concubines). Rather, he is – or pretends to be – not the master of his mistress but her slave, and that voluntary (and unreal) slavery allows him to claim that he has liberated himself from the stern voices of the implacable fathers (those old men and their threadbare laws, once the targets of Catullus' scorn, 5.2–3: *rumoresque senum severiorum/omnes unius aestimemus assis*, “the gossip of censorious old farts is worth about one red penny.” (For Propertius' “slavery” as ironic disguise, see Gold 1993) To what extent Propertius himself believed in and lived the erotic ideology that he represents in his Cynthia poems is as unknowable as it is irrelevant. What matters is that, having committed himself to his imaginative investigation of the new eroticism, Propertius found that the kind of poetry he was writing had become fused with his desire for artistic freedom. His Cynthia meant the writerly writing of Texts, and she also meant Sexual Liberation, the Rejection of the Patriarchy, and the poet's claim to Poetic Autonomy.

The Meaning of Maecenas

Caesar plots against India,
Tigris and Euphrates shall, from now on, flow at his bidding,
Tibet shall be full of Roman policemen

(Pound, *Homage to Sextus Propertius*)

Arguably his masterpiece, Ezra Pound's once notorious burlesque re-creation of key passages in Propertius' corpus is distinguished not only by its wit and verve but also by its shrewd insight into the poet's distinctive perspective on his era's politics. The Propertius that most of Pound's contemporaries were in the habit of reading was a fascinating if difficult love poet who happened also to be a loyal court poet: what Pound detected in the poems where others read enthusiastic assent to the Augustan regime was skepticism, irony and disenchantment.

It seems not unlikely that soon after the success of his *Monobiblos*, finding himself inducted into Maecenas' coterie, Propertius would make the acquaintance of Vergil and Horace. What these two poetic stars thought when they first encountered Maecenas' new find is unknowable and hard even to imagine. How Maecenas himself supposed his newcomer would fit in to his new surroundings is also difficult to guess at. But he apparently felt that he could persuade the passionate (and eccentric) young poet of love to transform himself into an ardent supporter of the *princeps* who would eventually reveal himself as an emperor, the brilliant and lucky politician who relied heavily on Maecenas for advice on various matters and not least for his fertile talents as master of political spin. That Maecenas was not slow in urging Propertius to add ardent civic advocacy to his repertoire of ardent erotic representations is clear from the very first poem in the poet's new volume (2A), which is addressed to his powerful new friend.

quaeritis, unde mihi totiens scribantur amores, 1: "You ask me why I am constantly busy writing love poems." That was the question that Maecenas posed to his latest "find," a question that perhaps he kept posing and reframing as he offered Propertius suggestions for new topics, for a wider view. Maecenas loved the first volume, but perhaps it was a bit too delicate, a bit soft (*mollis*, 2), not quite manly enough? (This from an amateur of very light verse who preferred delicate garments to his toga!) The poet, as we have seen, answers this question by proudly confessing that it is his girl who had provided him with his genius (not Calliope, the Olympian Muse, or Apollo, the Olympian god of poetry, a deity very dear to the heart and to the iconography of the man who was then fashioning himself as emperor). Having identified Cynthia as the only creator of his poethood, he then launches into an exquisite series of images that evoke her charms and explain the power she has to make a poet of him. This catalogue of her erotic virtues ends with vivid salacity: if, while they are in the midst of rough foreplay, her garment happens to be ripped from her, the sight of her nakedness inspires him to produce a spate of massive *Iliads*: in short, whatever she does and whatever she says, *maxima de nihilo nascitur historia*, "a superb history is born out of the merest nothing" (13–16).

These raptures are suddenly abandoned for an apology. If the Fates had gifted him with a different sort of talent, one for epic, he would not waste it on old Greek fables (like Hesiod or Homer) or on Greek history or early or fairly recent Roman history: he would devote himself, if he had any epical capacity, to commemorating the wars and the accomplishments of Augustus and, after that, of Maecenas himself (25–6). He then proceeds to sketch some of Augustus' wars and achievements, ending this skimpy catalogue with a renewed promise to include Maecenas in the epic he would like to write but cannot ("You, my muse, would constantly be weaving yourself into Augustus' military campaigns, since you serve faithfully as his chief advisor as to when to make war and when to make peace," *et sumpta et posita pace fidele caput*, 35–6). He then returns to his apology, identifying himself as an epigone of the counter-epical Callimachus, one whose gifts are woefully unsuited to singing the praises of famous soldiers. Instead, he finds his fame in dying for love and in being possessed by love for one woman only. This woman is so pure that she condemns others of her sex who do not share her gift for constancy. And, in fact, she has scorned the *Iliad* entire because it offers, in Helen, such a poor role model for those who might wish to be a one-man woman (47–50). He then admits that quite possibly his one true love is something of a *femme fatale*, as bewitching as ladies of legend (Phaedra and Circe for instance) who enchant their victims with wicked potions.

One woman alone has deprived him of his reason, and it is from her house that he expects (and wants) his body to go forth to its pyre (55–6).

Doctors can cure other afflictions, but all medicine is powerless where Real Love is the sickness unto death (57–8). Propertius glories in his incurable illness, and he only asks of Maecenas that, when, at some unspecified date, he chances to drive his fancy chariot past the poet's tomb, he will weep and whisper: *huic misero fatum dura puella fuit*, 78: "That cruel girl was the death of this miserable wretch."

In the only other poem in Book 3 (9) that is addressed to Maecenas, the poet offers a similarly disingenuous statement of his desire to satisfy the requests of his friend for epic compositions, one that is constantly undercut by his confessions of epical impotence and his total commitment to self-consuming passions and to poems that commemorate them. (See Johnson 2009, 121–2) Here, hinting at the modest ambitions of his powerful friend who modestly remains in the spot in which fortune has placed him, he asks why Maecenas keeps trying to make him trust his fragile vessel in the perilous seas of high epic (1–4). Once again we encounter variations (here rather elaborate) on the "shoemaker stick to thy last" truism (7–20) capped by a single sentence: *naturae sequitur semina quisque suae*, "everyone obeys his genetic code." And that is why, sticking to love poetry in the Callimachean manner (43–46), Propertius will continue to obey his natural bent (thereby winning the adulation of boys and girls in love with love – they worship him as a god), even as he imitates Maecenas, who also lives the life that nature intended him to lead, humbly content to remain as one of the powers hidden beyond the throne, when he could, if he wanted, display his gifts and his authority more ostentatiously, and find his name coupled with Caesar's, especially famed not so much for his bravery as for his fidelity (21–34). Still, if Maecenas has a change of heart and decides to take a more decisive and visible role in the history of his times (and the history of Rome), then the poet would be prepared to follow (against the grain) his mentor's lead and devote his genius (*sub tua iussa*, 52, "under your orders") to immortalizing the current military successes of the Augustan regime (including the demise of wicked Antony) in epic verse, 47–60. You start behaving epically, and I'll start writing epic.

So much for Maecenas and his cajoling. But the atmosphere of Book 3 tells another, more complicated story: not just bland, insincere refusals to toe the party line (the droll *recusationes*) but moods tinged with uncertainty and hesitation, these mingled with an increasing insistence on (or anxiety about) his place in the poetic pantheon. The first five poems of Book 3 concern themselves not with Cynthia but with the nature of his career and the quality of his achievement thus far. At 3.1.9–12 he presents himself as a triumphant general, back from the wars of love, laden with Callimachean spoils, accompanied with little cupids, trailed by (vanquished?) poets; and at 35–37 he predicts (not quite accurately) that whatever the envious throngs of his detractors may say (21) future Romans will honor his tomb. In the following poem (3.2) he repeats this prophecy more emphatically. It is still Woman that commands the center of his poetry (Cynthia has here vanished into an indefinite pronoun, 17–8), but the grandeur of his literary survival, which surpasses the pyramids and temples and the Mausoleum (and which may be mocking Horace's similar claim to poetic perpetuity), is what his mindset is currently focused on. In poem 3, he is toying with the idea of writing Roman epic once again, but, taking yet another page from Callimachus, he represents first Apollo and then Calliope as chiding his false ambition and enjoining him to continue writing the love poems he was born to write.

In poem 4 he seems to have decided to ignore their intervention and to write, at long last, of Augustus' victories. Now, he had in fact attempted to write such a poem before (Book 2A, 10), even addressing Augustus there by name (15). In this earlier poem, he contemplates freedom for his erotic muse and his self-transformation into a great Augustan *vates*: (*bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est*, 8, "I shall sing of wars since I've finished writing up my girl": but of course he had not – she will continue to figure prominently in the next volume, 2B). For the moment, however, he can offer only promises of this poetic conversion and continue to write love poems (see the elaborate ironic metaphor that conveys his rejection of grandeur and that closes this exercise in *il gran rifiuto* (2.10.19–26). In 3.4, his determination seems more powerful and his assertion of the inevitability of Augustus' triumphs over all Rome's enemies is full-voiced. He prays to Mars and Vesta that he may live to see the day when Augustus rides in the triumphal chariot, with all his humiliated enemies trudging in his wake. But this moment of epical vision dissolves in quiet laughter when Propertius casually lets us know that he was witnessing the spectacle of imperial glory with a companion. Ever the partisan of peace and a enemy of excessive wealth (these values become the ostensible topics of poem 5), leaning on his girlfriend's breast, he explains to her which cities the emperor has captured, and voices another prayer, this time to Venus, begging her to look after her royal kinfolk and preserve the emperor and his progeny forever (19–20). Then, in a striking break in his mood, he remarks that "they" who took the booty are welcome to it (presumably this "they" refers not just to his soldiers but to their commander); for himself he is content to applaud them as they move past him on the Sacred Way (21–2).

In poem 5, once again he distinguishes himself from those who live for profit and those who live for making war (and for making wars out of other wars, 12). After briefly taunting the worshippers of wealth, he voices one of his most famous (and most unpatriotic) statements: *victor cum victo pariter miscetur in umbris:/ consule cum Mario, capte Jugurtha, sedes*, 15–6), "victor and vanquished are equals when they meet in the underworld; captured Jugurtha, you sit side by side with the consul Marius" (in Charon's boat). As for himself, he rejoices in the fact that from his youth he has danced with the Muses and encircled his brain with lots of wine, and always had a garland of spring roses on his head (21–2). Much later, when he has grown up, he will be ready to study the nature of things, various natural phenomena and questions of what may or may not await us beyond the grave. Possibly he is contemplating converting himself into a Lucretian poet when his libido dwindles (and possibly he is sending up Vergil's famous threat to abandon poetry and give himself over wholly to the study of philosophy). In any case, he closes this poem about the meaning of his life and values with another jab at (greedy) soldiers whom he enjoins to go off to the wars they love so much and bring back the standards of Crassus.

What follows in Book 3 is a varied assortment of topics: Cynthia is still prevalent among them, but he also experiments with new subjects and new perspectives. Nevertheless, aside from an elegy on the emperor's nephew Marcellus, a poem tinged with ironic highlights – for well over half the poem its apparent consolation is undercut with elaborate musings on the fact that death renders the lucky equal with the luckless (3.18.11–30) – the poet shows no further interest in yielding to Maecenas' requests to celebrate the regime (3.9 is a funny, affectionate farewell to his mentor: I'll undertake heroic imaginings once I see you leading the way; see Johnson 2009, 121–2). Still, since

the volume closes, as we've seen, with the poet's ferocious, bitter farewells to his Cynthia, the only begetter of his poetry, the reader is led to expect that if the poet continues writing poetry he may at last find himself wholly at the disposal of Maecenas and the ideology he fosters so faithfully.

And indeed, in the opening poem of Book 4 Propertius represents himself as an ardent, sonorously vocal spokesman for the Roman Way. His genius, forgetful of its initial inspiration, is now devoted to the venerable monuments of the City, to the awesome history they reflect, and, especially, to the shining promise of its future as this is vouched for by its shining present (67–70):

Roma, fave: tibi surgit opus; date candida, cives,
omina; et inceptis dextera cantet avis!
sacra deosque canam et cognomina prisca locorum:
has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus.

"Rome, look with favor on me – it is for your sake that my present project is undertaken. Citizens, give me good omens, and let the prophetic bird sing me a lucky song! As for me, I shall sing of Roman rituals and Roman gods and of the ancient names of the places. This is the goal that my steed must sweat to reach."

Well and good: he has changed his mind and changed his act. But then, characteristically, the poet interrupts himself with a radical shift of tone and design. From out of nowhere there appears an astrologer who, having established his credentials as a truth-foreteller at considerable length (75–134), reminds the poet of Apollo's warnings against his plans to abandon love poetry (73) and of the god's crucial role in the poet's choosing to write love poetry at the outset of his career (133–4). In ordering the poet to continue writing love elegy, he insists that he must recognize that he will never escape from the domination of Cynthia (139–46).

Propertius tries to ignore the prophet's efforts to undo his new resolution to write patriotic poetry. He writes about the godling Vertumnus, about a soldier's wife who is anxious about her husband's tour of duty in the East, about the legend of Tarpeia (poems 2, 3, 4). But in poem 5 he indulges himself in a grotesque and funny tirade against a madam whose expertise in running her brothel, expansively documented, calls down on her the poet's vehement curses. This poem acts as a peculiar prelude to the volume's centerpiece, a celebration of Augustus' triumph over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in which Propertius finally performs all he has been promising and becomes a full-voiced *vates*, a great poet-prophet fully capable of representing this turning point in World History in all its solemn grandeur.

Most readers are satisfied with what appears to be the poem's vatic sincerity, but a few smell a cruel burlesque (see Hutchinson 2006, 152–5; Johnson 1973). In any case, the shaman's picture of what happened in history is followed by two poems (7 and 8) in which Cynthia, first as garrulous ghost and then as a jealous and violent lover, returns to enact the comic heroine of what may well be one of Propertius' masterpieces. These strange, wonderful poems give way to poems 9, 10, 11, on, respectively, Hercules and the Ara Maxima, the origins of the *spolia opima*, and the self-pitying ghost of Cornelia, a sort of anti-Cynthia who incarnates everything that Roman family values and Augustus' reconfigurations of them demanded of a Roman wife. (For Hercules, see

Anderson 1993; for Cornelia, see Johnson 2009) Taken all in all this grab bag of Roman themes and erotic meditations (the soldier's wife, Tarpeia and the Madam join with double Cynthia against long-suffering Cornelia) hardly constitute a volume of what Gertrude Stein christened "patriarchal poetry" (here, in its archetypal Roman avatar). Maecenas kept casting his wide and cunning net, but Propertius eluded it with perseverance and bravado.

The Ironic Erotic

So, she would come, like a fugitive, half-dead, to roll upon the
doormat which I have put for this very purpose outside my door.
So, she would come to Me with eyes absolutely insane, and she
would follow me with those eyes, everywhere, everywhere.

(Laforgue 1998, 251)

Propertius is among the least accessible (and maybe the least popular) of the great Roman poets for a variety of reasons. Chief among these are the textual problems that continue to bedevil him despite the valiant efforts of his editors (where do certain poems begin and end? what to make of what appear to be fragments of poems? what happened to the end of Book 2A and the beginning of Book 2B?). Next comes the poet's fondness for an oblique and jagged language that often complicates his considerable ability to craft a style that suits the normal Latin preference for harsh clarity and stern concision. Finally, there are the difficulties we face when we attempt to close with the wide range of his moods and perspectives: the tone (or tones) of voice that Propertius gives his poet-lover is marked by an unusual degree of ambiguity and irony. The obsessed creature who speaks these poems is a paradigm of erotic madness and un-Roman abjection, and his creator, it would seem, must in some measure accede to or at least sympathize with the erotic ideology that he incarnates. At the same time, Propertius, throughout his corpus (but especially in Books 2A, 2B and 3), and often in the same poem, mixes passionate devotion to erotic freedom with a cooler perspective, one in which the poet-lover, his behavior and his values are viewed with a wry detachment and subjected to a shrewd if friendly analysis of the genre he had inherited from Catullus and Calvus (2B.25.4 and 2B.34.87–90) and, more recently and perhaps more crucially from Gallus (91–92). (He refuses, of course, to mention Tibullus, but he can hardly have been unaware of his originality and of the success of his contemporary rival in erotic poetry.)

Something like a parallel to the Propertian mingling of eros and irony is offered by the much later literary phenomenon called (incongruously for our purposes) "romantic irony," a cogent description of which Anne K. Mellor (1980) provides: "... the authentic romantic ironist is as filled with enthusiasm as with skepticism. He is as much a romantic as an ironist. Having ironically acknowledged the fictiveness of his own patternings of human experience, he romantically engages in the creative process of life by eagerly constructing new forms, new myths. And these new fictions and self-concepts bear within them the seeds of their own destruction" (5). "Romantic" in Mellor's study refers only accidentally to eros (the major figures that concern her most are Byron, Keats, Carlyle, Coleridge, and

Lewis Carroll), but this concept, elaborately developed by German Romantic philosophers, has the merit, for our purposes, of focusing on a particular kind of double vision, one in which “sincerity” and skepticism engage in a peculiar dialectic (that is impervious to synthesis). This blending of antinomies is characteristic of Propertius’ distinctive mode, a fusion that puts him considerably closer to Cole Porter (“Down in the Dumps on the Eightieth Floor,” for example) than to the purer, Petrarchan norm, which allows for ironies but not for an ironical counter-voice against which the erotic voice must compete.

Propertius’ ironic erotic is clearly on view in poems where he treats himself with what amounts to a pitiless and droll self-mockery. In 1.3, when he stumbles “home” to Cynthia after a long night of heavy drinking, his efforts not to wake her up (fearing the scolding he knows he’s in for) are undermined by his need to touch her (and perhaps awaken her for sex); this hilarious cartoon is prefaced by an extravagant mythological preface (Cynthia as Ariadne, Andromeda as maenad) that heightens the absurdity of the unheroic drunk (no Bacchus or Perseus he) who is about to confront the inevitable tongue-lashing of his mistress, which she promptly administers (34–46). In a similar poem (2B.29), drunk again, the poet-lover, unattended by slaves and torches, is accosted in his midnight revels by a throng of angry cupids, sent by Cynthia to find him, apprehend him, and send him back to her. When he arrives back at Cynthia’s at dawn (2.29.23f), his first thought is to see if she is in bed by herself, and, finding that she is, he is enchanted by her loveliness. But once again she wakes, and once again she rails against him, this time accusing him of infidelity even as she protests (perhaps a bit too much) that she has remained true to him (31–8). She then gets into her slippers, and, denying him the chance to kiss her, disappears, leaving him defeated (and hung over). In poems 7 and 8 of Book 4, both dead Cynthia and living Cynthia seize the opportunity to give voice to their manifold displeasure with him, reducing him to a comic figure, whose stumbling and flaws and excesses reveal the fissures in the erotic ideology. (See Lefevre 1966, 32–8 and Hutchinson 2006, 170–2, 189–92)

Finally, in 3.6, Propertius shows his poet-lover quizzing one of Cynthia’s slaves about her response to a rumor of his dalliance with another woman. Instead of listening to the slave’s answer, he himself imagines her response, puts angry recriminations and protestations of her fidelity to him in her mouth, becoming a sort of ventriloquist Pygmalion and thereby revealing not her failings but his own anxieties and narcissism. In all these poems it is the voice of Cynthia that allows the self-mockery to blossom brightly, and it is her criticisms of her lover that permit us to glimpse the possibility that this poet’s versions of Cynthia are more about him than they are about her, and to entertain the notion that the genre of love elegy is a masculine invention whose codes are constructed to express masculine perspectives on “being in love,” perspectives which tend to focus on the suffering inflicted upon men by their women and to affirm the exemplary behavior of men in matters erotic (an affirmation, or alibi, which would, of course, help efface what might seem their amatory deficiencies).

2B.19 is informed by a somewhat similar irony. Here, in what may be a rather cruel send-up of Tibullus and his predilection for rural, Propertius imagines that Cynthia is heading off to the countryside where she will find no chance of being seduced by the poet’s cunning rivals and where oxen and viniculture will provide her with harmless contentments. She may even find herself participating in the rural dances of rural maidens that furnish glimpses of naked legs (15–6). This last detail to his vision of her countrified lifestyle leads him to imagine there the presence of peeping toms. He immediately

inserts himself into her vacation, and, fervent city slicker that he is, he promises to join her and himself take up pursuits that are suitable to the rural male, such as hunting with hounds – not after lions, of course, or wild boars: rather, his quarry would be rabbits or birds (19–26). The poem ends with the poet-lover promising to join his mistress shortly because his attempts to imagine her safe from temptation in the countryside cannot dispel his fears that his rivals might not be defeated by her temporary rustication. What plunges the poem into complete bathos (and with it the lover-poet and his genre) are those rabbits and birds: his tiny targets reduce the would-be hunter to a figure of fun, and therewith the lover's anxieties (along with his attempts to invent verisimilar details that can represent his passion) mutate to hilarity.

No less funny are the poet's frequent resorts to hyperbole of various kinds. In a poem that sets up the outlines of a very serious narrative moment, Cynthia's grave illness (2B.28), his efforts to magnify his subject's medical crisis with a plethora of mythological allusions threaten to render him slightly ridiculous. (Quintilian and readers who share his distaste for Propertius perhaps find in this strategy merely another instance of the poet's bad taste). He begins by wondering if his mistress' sickness has been caused by the excessive heat that arrives with the dog days, but he quickly decides that Cynthia has brought her sickness on herself, both because women fail to honor the gods and swear false oaths of fidelity (5–8), and because pretty women tend to boast of their beauty (13–4). Perhaps Cynthia angered Venus by comparing herself with the goddess of love and beauty? Or maybe she said uncomplimentary things about Juno's walk? Or did she mention that she thought Minerva had ugly eyes? (9–12). This skewed allusion to the Judgment of Paris is witty in its own right, but it detracts our attention from the dangers that confront the poet's mistress, functioning as an awkward and irrelevant ornament to a scene which should focus solely on the lover's concern for her. Having suggested that she brought her sickness on herself, he tries to cheer her up by reminding her of the great heroines of poetic myth who survived the perils they encountered and were richly rewarded for their sufferings (Io, Leucothea, Andromeda, Callisto, 15–24). Yet should she chance to die, she will be able to chat with Semele, another victim of her own beauty, and, indeed, finding herself among the great erotic heroines of epic, she will, by their own admission, be supreme (25–30). This pattern of baroque ornamentation and ironic hyperbole continues when Cynthia recovers her health and Propertius, having offered his thanksgivings to Jupiter for her escape from death, uses another generous cluster of legendary beauties to construct his most famous and most beautiful tribute to Cynthia's incomparable loveliness. Dead are Antiope, Tyro, Europa, Pasiphae, and all the celebrated beautiful women of Crete and Greece and Rome, but Cynthia lives: *sunt apud infernos tot milia formosarum:/pulchra sit in superis, si licet, una locis*, 49–50. As Pound puts it neatly, "There are enough women in hell,/ quite enough beautiful women." Let one and only one remain on earth, one who incarnates all of them. That is at once witty, extravagant and – so it seems – heartfelt. And unforgettable.

Conclusion

As a writer and perhaps even as an existing individual Propertius was committed to the erotic ideology that his chosen genre reflected. This genre and its codes promised him a freedom from convention, a freedom that was that was at once merely personal (he could

become who he chose to be and love whom he chose to love) and also artistic (he could experiment with this newest of literary forms, could shape it as he wished to shape it, even, or especially, when his personal and artistic values ran counter to those of what the age demanded). He could be passionate (or feign passion with pen and ink) and he could be or present himself as being an eloquent (obsessed) spokesman of the new erotics. But he could also (often simultaneously) give rein to his natural skepticism and allow his natural gift for satire to come into vigorous play. He could give genuine voice to the Mad Lover even while he was also a keen observer of the Mad Lover's extravagant ideology and of the genre that defined it and him. At once impassioned and cynical, actor and spectator, Propertius so designs the moods and pictures of erotic experience that he imagines and represents that they take on a unique flavor, one that is ardent, embittered and unsettling, one that disturbs even when it pleases most, and, above all, one that is shot through with a wit as ruthless as it is humane.

FURTHER READING

Among older studies, Lefevre, Hubbard, Commager and Sullivan continue to provide valuable readings of the poems. Goold's Loeb version is provocative and insightful. Among recent books, Keith's study is eminently sound, and Miller's is as rewarding as it is ambitious. Indispensable are the commentaries by Heyworth and Hutchinson.

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CHAPTER 4

Tibullus

Paul Allen Miller

Tibullus possesses the rare honor of being considered the foremost representative of his genre in antiquity and so incoherent by modern scholars that one famously attributed a brain abnormality to him (Wageningen 1913). In recent years, his stock has risen with the publication of several influential articles, chapters, and dissertations (Fineberg 1991, Kennedy 1993, Miller 1999, 2004, and Wray 2003), as well as a new commentary (Maltby 2002). Nonetheless, it is striking that scholars, such as Ellen Greene (1998), have felt free to exclude him from book length treatments of elegy. Likewise, although a number of monographs have been devoted to the poetry of Ovid and Propertius, it has been thirty years since one devoted to Tibullus has appeared in English. Clearly, the ancient and modern views of Tibullus diverge.

To get a clearer understanding of why the moderns have failed to see the virtues in Tibullus that ancient readers did, it is worthwhile to compare his fate to that of Propertius and Ovid. In the last twenty years, Propertian textual criticism has generated a great deal of attention. Scholars such as Butrica (1997) and Heyworth (2007a, 2007b), following on the earlier work of Margaret Hubbard (1974), have sought to emend, transpose, and rewrite the text with the express purpose of making Propertius read “more like Ovid.” These same critics reject as anachronistic another strand of Propertian criticism that views his text as exemplifying a protomodernist aesthetic of discontinuity and inconcinnity first defined by Pound (cf. Sullivan 1964; Benediktson 1989), arguing instead for a more historically-based concept of elegiac style, which takes Ovid as its model. Even those who argue for a more cautious approach leave Tibullus distinctly on the sidelines in these discussions (Fedeli 1987; Tarrant 2006). Instead, the editors of Propertius often base their textual revisionism on a reading of the relatively few ancient poetic descriptions of Propertius. These passages are by and large isolated, one or two word descriptions that are susceptible to more than one interpretation, but all seem to emphasize the

elegant and pleasing nature of Propertian poetry. Ovid as the elegist whose text is best attested, and therefore least controversial, and whose poetry has the clearest and most linear rhetorical development, thus becomes the model to which the Propertian text is supposed to be adapted.

Tibullus is not a player in this modern game. But this is unfortunate and, I would argue, fundamentally distorts the nature of elegiac verse. Indeed, Quintilian, in his discussion of the matter, is clear: Tibullus is the chief exemplar of the genre, though some prefer Propertius, while Ovid and Gallus are each in their own ways outliers (*Inst.* 10.1.93). Why then has nobody proposed a critical edition of Propertius based on the assumption that, if we only had a proper text, he would surely read more like Tibullus? What has made Tibullus so difficult to assimilate to modern tastes, even those of self-consciously historicizing philologists? And what would elegy look like to us, if he rather than Ovid were the model? An understanding of these issues, will not only help appreciate Tibullus's poetry, but will also help us dispel the notion that a single normative style of Augustan elegy exists and that our texts must be altered to fit that model.

One cause for this discrepancy between ancient and modern views of Tibullan poetry is the latter's deceptive subtlety. His is not a poetry of big ideas and grand statements. It does not propound a thesis or even paint a consistent scene. Instead, as Paul Veyne argues, it often seems to drift from topic to topic "through the mere associations of ideas and words" (Veyne 1988: 36). It may begin in one place – a farm, a symposium, before a statue of Priapus – but soon we are at a crossroads, on an island, or performing a magical rite. Each step takes place effortlessly, but it can be very difficult to say exactly where we are going or, even, where we have been (Putnam 1973: 6–7, 11–12; Lyne 1980: 181–83).

The speaker does not endow the poem with a single center of meaning but rather proceeds by a series of associations. Transitions are not abrupt and seldom explicitly motivated. Ralph Johnson speaks of the corpus as "a fever's dream," an "achronological, spiritual, autobiographical collection" (1990: 102–03). For scholars expecting linear development, logical transitions, and a clear rhetorical framing, Tibullus can be maddeningly frustrating and even termed a failure (Jacoby 1909–10). And, as in the case of Propertius, when critics have failed to find the forms of poetic development they deem appropriate, they have sometimes resorted to the expedient of proposing transpositions and emendations (cf. Murgatroyd 1991 on 1.1.25–32, and Maltby 2002: 27).

Tibullus's poems are, in fact, complex tissues of related, interwoven, and sometimes contradictory themes. In poem 1.1, which we shall examine in more depth, the poet begins by contrasting the life of the farmer with that of the soldier. He then switches into praise of his patron Messalla and finishes with an evocation of his life as Delia's *servus amoris*. The entire poem, although possessing no single scene or argument, proceeds in a harmonious fashion, returning to certain key oppositions such as *labor* ("struggle") versus *inertia* ("inactivity"), and *diuitiae* ("riches") versus *paupertas* ("poverty"). For those expecting Catullus's dramatic sincerity or Ovid's rhetorical brilliance, the Tibullan world of soft-focus irony is disorienting, even alienating. Yet, Ovid labels Tibullus *cultus*, "refined" (*Amores* 1.15.28) and dedicates an entire poem to him on his death (*Amores* 3.9). Horace dedicated two poems to him and terms him a worthy judge of his satires (*Odes* 1.33; *Epistles* 1.4). And, as we have seen, for Quintilian he is clearly the exemplar of the genre, with Propertius a close second. If Tibullus becomes the standard from

which elegy is read, then assumptions about the forms of coherence and organization admissible by the genre become very different. What if Propertius, in fact, does read more like Tibullus?

In what follows I shall first offer a brief overview of what is known about Tibullus and sketch in broad strokes the outline of his oeuvre. I will then offer readings of three poems that I see as particularly revealing of the nature and structure of Tibullus's poetry. The first will be poem 1.1, whose transition from city to country, has always presented problems for Tibullan commentators and whose less than obvious expository order has produced calls for emendation and transposition. Inasmuch as this is the opening poem of Tibullus's first collection, we can also assume that it has a programmatic aspect and is designed to introduce the Tibullan poetic project as a whole. The second will be 1.2. This poem, which is a Tibullan variation on the elegiac topos of the *paraclausithyron*, begins and ends, as in the previous poem, in two very different places. In this case, however, the setting of the opening itself has been the cause of much debate and seems to defy singular characterization. The indeterminacy of the opening sequence introduces a poem that is structured less around a single discursive focal point – a theme, a speaker, or a setting – than a complex series of related motifs whose associative implications are both multifaceted and nonlinear. The result is a poetic structure that is both deeply coherent and yet defies a simple account. The last poem we will be looking at is poem 2.3. In Tibullus's second book, he has a new mistress whose name, Nemesis, reveals the change in her nature. The goddess Nemesis is the spirit of divine retribution, and Tibullus's *puella* in the second book represents the inverse of everything for which Delia, the mistress of Book 1, stood. Thus poem 2.3 will not only display the structural characteristics we have come to anticipate, as well as the longest sustained mythological exemplum in the Tibullan corpus; it also features an ironic overturning of many the thematic commonplaces that characterize the poetry of Book 1.

Overview of Life and Works

Tibullus, as we have indicated, does in some ways seem atypical. Where Catullus, Propertius, and Ovid all have explicit programmatic passages in which they pledge loyalty to a Callimachean poetics, Tibullus never directly names a predecessor. Although, as we shall see in 2.3, he is able to indicate his allegiances in subtle ways. His poems are longer on average than those of the other elegists. Where Propertius and Ovid generally have shorter poems that average between thirty and fifty lines, though there can be variation, Tibullus's elegies average between seventy and eighty.

Information on his life is not plentiful. Tibullus was born between 60 and 55 BCE and died in 19 (Putnam 1973: 3). Ancient testimony links him to the area near Pedum in the Alban hills east of Rome (Horace, *Epistles* 1.4.2). He was closely associated with the orator and general, M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus (64 BCE to 8 CE) and accompanied him on his Aquitanian campaign. Messalla was a senator and politician who cultivated the arts. He appears to have served as a patron for Tibullus, as he later did for Ovid. After some hesitation, Messalla supported Augustus in his conflict with Antony but shortly after celebrating his Aquitanian triumph in 27 BCE, he retired from politics. Tibullus's poetry, unlike Propertius's or Ovid's, is free of references to Augustus. From a statement

at 1.1.41–42, we can deduce that Tibullus's family, like many others, suffered a reduction of fortune during the proscriptions carried out by the second triumvirate after the defeat of Caesar's assassins.

Tibullus published his work in two books. The first *c.* 26 BCE, is largely concerned with Tibullus's love for Delia (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6), but also features three pederastic poems (1.4, 1.8, and 1.9) dedicated to Marathus. Tibullus here is following Hellenistic precedent in which love poetry written in elegiac meters was generally homoerotic in nature. Catullus did the same, writing erotic epigrams about his love for Juventius in addition to the Lesbia poems. Neither Propertius nor Ovid includes homoerotic poems in their collections. Tibullus's Book 1 also includes a poem celebrating Messalla's birthday and comparing him to the Egyptian god, Osiris (1.7), as well as a final, more generic poem on love and the virtues of rural simplicity (1.10).

Delia's social status is never directly mentioned, nor are we given any meaningful description of her as a dramatic character. We do know that she demands gifts from Tibullus, and this is often characteristic of *meretrices*. We also know that she is kept under lock and key by her *uir*, a term that can be translated "husband" but possesses a wide semantic range and may to refer to any man with whom a woman has a long-term relationship. It would not be uncommon for a *meretrix* to be in such a relationship, and her livelihood would depend on her ability to extract material benefits from her lover or his rivals (Veyne 1988: 1–2; Konstan 1995: 150–58; James 2003: 35–107). A respectable Roman *matrona* would hardly have risked her reputation by having dissolute poets hanging about her door, wheedling and whining to be let in. Yet this is precisely the situation with Delia in poem 1.2, where she is described as locked inside with Tibullus's wealthy rival who, we are told, had won her favor with expensive gifts.

The opposition of the *dives amator* ["rich lover"] to the poor poet is part of the general emphasis on the preference for genteel poverty over acquiring riches through warfare or mercantile adventures announced in the opening lines of poem 1.1. However, given Tibullus's equestrian status, the stance of the poor poet must be regarded as a mere pose. The celebration of the virtues of poverty is, in fact, part of the pastoral genre's praise of country life in general, one recycled throughout much Augustan poetry. By the same token, the preference for amorous *otium* ("leisure") over a more socially approved and fiscally remunerative *negotium* ("business") is typical of erotic elegy from its inception.

Tibullus's second book is largely devoted to his affair with the aptly named Nemesis (2.3, 2.4, 2.6). While he portrays his love for Delia as hardly ideal, things deteriorate in Book 2. Nemesis is imagined as a cold and calculating mistress whose sole interest is money. The poet's self-abasement before his beloved becomes complete in Book 2 when he proposes to become a field slave so that he can be close to his mistress when she goes to the country estate of his rich rival. Where Delia represented the fantasized unity of *otium* (leisure) and the fruits of *negotium* (abundance, social recognition), Nemesis stands for their opposite: poverty, labor, and public humiliation. Gone is the idealized country life of Book 1. This field hand gets blisters and a sunburn. In Book 1, Tibullus wishes for a life of rural ease. Here, he embraces menial labor. In Book 1, he dreams of a relation of ideal unity with Messalla, the exemplar of civic virtue (1.5.29–36). Here, he fantasizes about a life of plunder to satisfy Nemesis's desire for luxury goods (2.3.35–58).

The rest of Book 2 is devoted to Tibullus's friends and patrons. Poem 2.1, dedicated to Messalla, recounts the celebration of the Ambarvalia. Poem 2.2 is a short piece on the birthday of Tibullus's friend Cornutus. Poem 2.5 is long narrative elegy celebrating the election of Messalla's son, Messallinus, to the college of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, the keepers of the Sibylline oracles.

Poem 1.1

Poem 1.1 begins as a rural idyll set in the subjunctive mood. It does not indicate a state of affairs, but rather a set of desires. These desires themselves are nothing unusual and constitute a recognized part of the Roman ideological landscape: wishes for a return to country piety, for ease and material prosperity, for social recognition from other elites, and for amorous fulfillment. Yet, while these desires in themselves are familiar, they do not in Tibullus 1.1 seem to emanate from any one recognizable center. Who is this speaker expressing these wishes: a farmer, a soldier, a dissolute lover? All have been posited. Where is he to be located in physical, ideological, or social space? None of these things is made clear, and the initial answers often seem to be contradicted by later developments, as the reader moves through the poem.

At the same time, while familiar values are expressed in the desires articulated by the poem – if often in unconventional collocations – the subject who voices them also adopts positions that would be highly unusual for an elite male to claim as his own. Thus the speaker of the first poem embraces the virtues of country life and simple living in language that often recalls Vergil's in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. So far so good. At the same time, he claims *inertia* as one of his primary values: that is, laziness, inactivity, impotence (1.1.5 and 1.1.58). This is far more problematic. Rough rural piety and urban amorous flaccidity are normally opposed in Roman life. Nor is this the only such contradiction. In one passage later in the poem, the poet speaks in awestruck tones of the vestibule of Messalla's home and how it is lined with trophies of military conquest (1.1.53–54). In the very next, he imagines himself a door slave at the home of his lover (1.1.55–56). The appropriate recognition of elite male values sits cheek by jowl with those of the socially and sexually humiliated. What is, in fact, the world that is wished for here and who are we to imagine wishing for it? The dreamlike quality of Tibullan verse is on display everywhere, and, like dreams, there often seems to be no single center from which meaning emanates, nor are we even necessarily aware of its radical incongruities until we try to subject the text to a rational analysis.

It is easy to see from this brief sketch how Tibullus could prove baffling to critics, and how they might well prefer something that reads more like Ovid. But such a perspective is not only anachronistic, it also fails to appreciate the subtle complexity that characterizes this work. The poem, as we have seen, begins with the poet disclaiming a life of greed and acquisitiveness as well as the toil and danger characteristic of the soldier:

Diuittias alius fuluo sibi congerat auro
et teneat culti iugera multa soli,
quem labor adsiduus uicino terreat hoste,
Marta cui somnos classica pulsa fugent:

me mea paupertas uita traducat inerti,
 dum meus adsiduo luceat igne focus.
 ipse seram teneras maturo tempore uites
 rusticus et facili grandia poma manu:
 nec Spes destituat sed frugum semper acruos
 praebat et pleno pinguis musta lacu.

(1.1.1–10)

[Let another pile up riches for himself in tawny gold
 and hold many acres of ploughed land
 whom constant struggle strikes with terror
 and whose sleep is routed by Martial trumpet blasts.
 Let my poverty hand me over to a sluggard's life,
 so long as my hearth glows with a constant fire.
 Let me myself sow tender vines at the ripe time, a bumpkin,
 and let me plant grown fruits with an easy hand:
 Nor let Hope desert me, but piles of fruit
 let it ever offer and rich must in a full vat. (All translations are my own)]

The poet seeks not a life of glory or riches. He does not wish to join the plutocracy that made up the Roman elite, here portrayed as soldiers enriched off booty (1.1.1–4). In the forties and thirties BCE when Tibullus came to maturity, such soldiers would have made their fortunes primarily from the spoils of civil conflict. The aspiration to win glory on the battlefield and possess landed wealth as well as a claim to social standing had become increasingly stained with the blood of fellow citizens. But what is the aspiration expressed by this string of subjunctives? Are Roman equestrians, like Tibullus, really to be out sowing their own fields? Are tender elegiac poets really supposed to shed the label of urban elegance (*urbanus*) and adopt the role of rude country bumpkins (*rusticus*)? The whole thing is ridiculously comic and, at the same time, the incongruity points to a moment of real pathos, a genuine utopian desire for a time before the fall, a Golden Age, when *inertia* (“laziness,” “impotence,” but also “leisure”) could be a form of *uirtus* (“manliness,” “virtue”).

The incongruities continue to multiply as we progress through the poem. The contrast between the ease of country virtue and urban greed and anxiety is both confirmed and inverted at the central turning point of the poem. It is confirmed in the sense that the city remains the site of acquisition and hence of a world fallen from bucolic innocence. But it is inverted in the sense that the very exemplar of Roman aristocratic *uirtus*, the poet's patron Messalla, is pictured in a wealthy home overflowing with the spoils of conquest, and the poet's own desire is revealed to lie within the city as well, where he will be a *ianitor*. Indeed, the fantasy of rural ease and fulfillment is the corollary of an equal and opposite fantasy of urban self-abasement. The sequence of associations, as presented in the following passage, is revealing: war, wealth, and respectability; social and sexual humiliation; *inertia* and death.

te bellare decet terra, Messalla, marique,
 ut domus hostiles praeferat exuias:
 me retinent uinctum formosae uincla puellae,
 et sedeo duras ianitor ante fores.

non ego laudari curo, mea Delia: tecum
 dum modo sim, quaeso segnis inersque uocer.
 te spectem, suprema mihi cum uenerit hora,
 et teneam moriens deficiente manu.

(1.1.53–60)

[It is fitting, Messalla, that you wage war on land and sea,
 so that your house may display enemy spoils:
 The chains of a beautiful girl hold me bound
 and I sit a slave before her hard door.
 I do not care to be praised, my Delia: so long as I am
 with you, I seek to be called sluggish and impotent.
 May I see you, when my final hour has come
 and, dying, may I hold you with a failing hand.]

The *inertia*, which before was contrasted with the greed of the freebooting soldier or land-owner, has here become once more a sign of shame, which nonetheless is to be worn as a badge of honor. The humiliation of being chained to his mistress's door as a *ianitor* or "door-slave" is preferable to the social position of Messalla, which even so is approved and even exalted. The fantasy of the contented *rusticus* who effortlessly plants fruit trees with his own hands, which dominated the first fifty lines of the poem, has been swept away. If your measure of poetic excellence is the direct expression of a consistent and unified subject position through a clever rhetorical exposition of sustained argument, Tibullus is not your man.

Nonetheless, these poems are far from being incoherent, chaotic, or the clear product of a diseased mind (Wageningen 1913). They are in fact exquisitely wrought aesthetic objects. In its final passages, poem 1.1 returns to all its major themes, even as it inverts them, creating a garland in which each thematic flower is tied to the next. The whole creates a sustained chain of significations, but one that possesses neither a center nor an easily abstractable meaning.

nunc leuis est tractanda uenus, dum frangere postes
 non pudet et rixas inseruisse iuuat.
 hic ego dux milesque bonus: uos, signa tubaeque,
 ite procul, cupidis uulnera ferte uiris,
 ferte et opes: ego composito securus aceruo
 dites despiciam despiciamque famem.

(1.1.73–78)

[Now frivolous love should be pursued while breaking down doors
 causes no shame and it brings joy to have started fights.
 Here I am a good commander and soldier: you, standards and
 trumpets be gone, bear wounds to men who desire,
 And bear riches too: secure with my own pile heaped up,
 I will despise wealth and I will despise hunger.]

The passage begins by invoking the standard elegiac trope of *militia amoris* (see Veyne 1988: 32; Wyke 1989: 36–37; Kennedy 1993: 54–55). The lover, who had portrayed himself as an impotent sluggard, is now breaking down doors and starting fights. He will be the equal of Messalla, but on the field of love. The life that was rejected before is

embraced, not however beneath the standards of Rome, but those of Venus: “Bear wounds to men who desire!” (76). The formula is richly ambiguous. On the surface, it means let those who want to be soldiers have the wounds they seek. But, of course, no soldier desires to be wounded, except those who march in Cupid’s camp (cf. Propertius 2.7; Ovid *Amores* 1.9). The play on *cupidus* immediately after *uenus* is not to be missed. Cupidity is the offspring of Love. At the same time the poet disclaims any desire for riches. Yet he too will be safe with his own “pile” and will be able to look down upon both the greed and the poverty of others. The final line gives the illusion of the poem having come to a balance, a Golden Mean between excessive greed and poverty, but it is a mean predicated on excess: the breaking down of doors, fantasies of death in Delia’s arms, the embrace of genteel poverty, and the celebration of Messalla’s riches.

Poem 1.2

Poem 1.2 is no easier to circumscribe within a unified setting, point of view, or abstractable meaning. Generically, it is most often classified as a paraclausithyron (Putnam 1973: 10). On one level, this is certainly correct. Yet it is anything but a straightforward serenade by a locked out lover (*exclusus amator*). The poem opens in *medias res*. The speaker is calling for more wine (*adde merum*). He wants to drink himself to sleep and forget his pain (*dolores*). He warns those around him not to try to wake him “so long as unhappy love slumbers.” In consequence of this opening command and accompanying warning, the speaker appears to many commentators to be in a private or sympotic setting (Lyne 1980: 180; Bright 1978: 137). It is only in lines 5 and 6 that mention is first made of the beloved’s door, and only then is he portrayed as a locked out lover (Murgatroyd 1991: 71; Cairns 1979: 166–67; Putnam 1973: 10). In which setting, then, is this scene really taking place: before Delia’s door, at a drinking party, or in some fantastical theater of recollection? From a logical point of view, it would seem difficult to reconcile these options. Our speaker must be *some place*. Yet, the true question is not where is he “in reality”; we are not dealing with reality. In fact, this interpretive problem, which has caused critical consternation over the years, begins not with the text of Tibullus but with the assumption that the poem is a mimetic act representing a dramatic scene portrayed from a single point of view. This is our assumption not the poem’s. In fact, its hallucinatory quality is part of its appeal (Bright 1978: 140–41).

Let us examine the opening of poem 1.2 in more depth.

Adde merum uinoque nouos conpesce dolores,
 occupet ut fessi lumina uicta sopor,
 neu quisquam multo percutsum tempora baccho
 excitet, infelix dum requiescit amor.
 nam posita est nostrae custodia saeua puellae,
 clauditur et dura ianua firma sera.
 ianua difficilis domini, te uerberet imber,
 te Iouis imperio fulmina missa petant.
 ianua, iam pateas uni mihi, uicta querellis,
 neu furtim uerso cardine aperta sones.
 et mala si qua tibi dixit dementia nostra,

ignoscas: capiti sint precor illa meo.
 te meminisse decet, quae plurima uoce peregi
 supplice, cum posti floridaserta darem.
 (1.2.1–14)

[Bring unmixed drink and restrain new pains with wine,
 So that the sleep of exhaustion might seize our conquered eyes:
 Nor let anyone wake a man struck in his temples with much Bacchus,
 So long as luckless love lies quietly.
 For a savage watch has been placed upon our girl,
 And the unyielding door is closed with a hard bar.
 Let the rain pelt you, o door of a difficult master,
 Let lightning sent by Jupiter's power seek you.
 Door, overcome by my complaints alone, swing wide now,
 Nor make a sound, when opened stealthily on your turned hinge.
 And if in my madness I cursed you, forgive me:
 I pray, let those curses fall upon my own head.
 You should remember the many things my suppliant voice
 Accomplished when I gave floral crowns to your doorposts.]

The passage is very fluid. It moves from demanding more wine, to calling curses upon the door, to addressing wheedling prayers to the same. The ever-shifting tone mirrors the uncertainty of location with which the poem opens. Indeed, all that is stable is the lover's desire and its transgressive nature. This is not a respectable love but a shameful passion for an irregular mistress held captive by her lover or master.

When we reach lines 5 and 6, moreover, it is not only the physical but also the discursive *mise-en-scène* scene that has changed. In opposition to the previous four lines' emphasis on sleep and rest, we have words that indicate firmness, opposition, and other traditional masculine, even military, virtues (*sæua*, *dura*, *firma*). These qualities, however, are ironically attributed to the door and then, by implication, to Delia (Putnam 1973: ad loc). Not only is there doubt concerning the physical setting of the poem, but also the ideological universe in which the poet operates is shown to be fundamentally unstable. There is, in fact, a kind of double movement that occurs in this and other passages. The trope of *militia amoris*, as we have observed, is common in elegy. In it, virtues attributed to soldiers are transferred to the lovers who represent their ideological antitheses, as we saw at the end of 1.1. The norm within elegiac discourse is, in fact, a simple inversion, so that what is characteristic of the fighter is attributed instead to the lover.

What happens in 1.2, however, is something far more destabilizing. Military virtues such as ferocity, toughness, and stability of purpose are, in a second displacement, removed from the drunken lover posed to make an assault on the door (cf. 1.1.73–74) and transferred to the door itself. What ought to be the stable virtues of Roman military life are displaced from the lover, to whom they should not in fact belong, and transferred from him first to an inanimate object, the *ianua*, and, then, by metonymy, to the woman the door stands before, both of whom belong to a *difficilis dominus*. The double displacement is significant and in fact far more destabilizing than a simple inversion: for while we may laugh at an inversion of values, we always recognize that a world on its head can still walk on its feet. The double displacement means that there is no longer a simple binary relationship between the transgressive and the normal; values and

significations have begun to float freely from their established objects. If we add to this ideological double displacement the erasure of a firm placement in physical space, the Tibullan text comes to function less as the expression of a unitary subject and more as a series of interlinked and yet disseminated significations. A floating tumble of words and images displaces any notion of a person behind them.

In the following section of the poem, Tibullus shifts to addressing Delia directly, though she is still locked behind the unyielding door:

Tu quoque ne timide custodes, Delia, falle,
 audendum est: fortes adiuuat ipsa Venus.
 illa fauet seu quis iuuenis noua limina temptat,
 seu reserat fixo dente puella fores:
 illa docet molli furtim derepere lecto,
 illa pedem nullo ponere posse sono,
 illa uiro coram nutus conferre loquaces
 blandaque conpositis abdere uerba notis.
 nec docet hoc omnes, sed quos nec inertia tardat
 nec uetat obscura surgere nocte timor.

(1.2.15–24)

[You too, Delia, do not deceive the guards timidly.
 You must be daring. Venus herself aids the strong.
 She shows her favor whether some youth assaults a new threshold
 Or a girl unlocks the doors with a fixed key:
 She teaches how to creep stealthily from the soft bed,
 She teaches how to walk without a sound,
 She teaches how, right before your man, to exchange speaking nods
 And how to conceal sweet nothings in secret signs.
 And she does not teach this to just anyone, but only to those whom
 neither laziness slows nor fear forbids to rise in the dark of night.]

The lover here sings the praises of Venus in a bid to persuade his beloved to unlock the door. *Inertia*, which is portrayed as a virtue in 1.1.5, where Tibullus praises the life of the farmer and the lover in contrast to that of the freebooting soldier, here becomes a vice. Superficially, this realigns Tibullus with dominant Roman ideology. But, where in traditional ideology *inertia* is stigmatized because it symbolizes the opposite of the virtues possessed by the ideal Roman farmer-soldier, here it is blamed as the opposite of what the daring lover and beloved must possess in order to deceive Delia's *dominus*.

In the next section, the speaker warns all passersby, who might see him before Delia's door, to be silent, lest they come to know that "Venus is born from blood and the foaming sea" (35–42). The castration of Uranus by Saturn forms a vivid threat, even as it implicitly reminds the reader of the lover's own impotence, his "inertia," when faced with Delia's locked door and the *custodes* posted by her *uir*. The question of whether others need fear either his or Venus's vengeance is put to one side, and he reminds us that this entire discourse, which has recently pretended to be directed against the door or the prying eyes of others, is designed to persuade a mistress to yield to his entreaties (James 2003) – a mistress who under all interpretations is not present to hear him. Delia,

in fact, is either locked behind the door or a figment of his wine-sodden imagination. Of course, it is part of Tibullus's dreamlike discourse, with its subtle and oblique transitions and its refusal of a single rhetorical center, to cause us momentarily to forget not only the address to the door and to Delia but also the poem's seemingly sympotic opening.

Thus after an initial profession that Venus helps those who help themselves (23–24), the poet backtracks. If the goddess or Delia fails to deliver, there's always black magic. Lines 45–54 are given over to the topic of witchcraft and the various standard "proofs" of the *saga*'s power: the ability to raise the dead, to call down the moon, and to make rivers change course, all of which the speaker claims to have witnessed himself. In lines 55–58, however, we come to the real point. The speaker claims to have obtained a charm of invisibility that would allow him and Delia to remain unseen, even if caught in *flagrante delicto*. This whole passage has been nothing more than a series of rhetorical amplifications designed to convince the mistress to satisfy his desires.

In lines 57–58, however, the poet suddenly and comically realizes that if he and Delia are invisible, or if Delia believes that they are, then she might also believe that she and his rivals would be as well. The speaker beats a hasty retreat. He warns Delia not to try to use the charm with anyone else. It only works for him:

tu tamen abstineas aliis: nam cetera cernet
omnia: de me uno sentiet ille nihil.

[Nonetheless, you should keep away from others: for he will perceive
all the rest, about me alone he will sense nothing.]

We watch as the poet tries to cobble together a justification for the absurd position in which he finds himself: a witch's charm can make Delia invisible but only if she is having sex with him. "Why should I believe it?" ("quid credam?") He *knows* the witch can be trusted because she said she would make him fall out of love (59–61)! Of course, that didn't happen. On one level, these lines possess a cinematic quality: we seem to watch the poet tying himself into knots in "real time." On another level, though, it is completely unclear to whom he is supposed to be speaking: his fellow drinkers? Delia? the door? his own fevered imagination? In the next couplets, there follows a narrative of the purification ceremony, which was supposed to release the poet from the bonds of love, and of the reasons for its failure: he secretly prayed not for release but for Delia to requite his passion (63–66). She need only open her door and she will prove, once and for all, the witch's power.

The poem's end does nothing to alleviate this artful confusion. In lines 65–74, the poet elaborates a contrast between an unnamed third party (*ille*) and himself (*ipse*):

ferreus ille fuit qui, te cum posset habere,
maluerit praedas stultus et arma sequi.
ille licet Cilicum uictas agat ante cateruas,
ponat et in capto Martia castra solo,
totus et argento contextus, totus et auro,
insideat celeri conspiciendus equo;
ipse boues mea si tecum modo Delia possim
iungere et in solito pascere monte pecus,
et te dum liceat teneris retinere lacertis,
mollis et inculsa sit mihi somnus humo.

[That one was made of iron who, when he was able to have you,
 like a fool preferred to follow after arms and plunder.
 That one can lead before him captured troops of Cilicians
 and place his martial camp on foreign soil,
 wholly woven out of silver and wholly out of gold
 let him sit on a swift horse demanding to be seen;
 if only I with you, my Delia, might be able to yoke oxen
 and pasture my herd on its accustomed mountain,
 and, so long as it would be permitted to hold you in tender arms,
 sleep, even on the raw earth, would be soft.]

The last two couplets briefly bring us back to the rural idyll of poem 1. Yet a major question remains, who is *ille*? Three answers appear in the scholarly literature. They are logically mutually exclusive, but on a rhetorical and interpretive level they are not. The first and most common answer is Delia's *coniunx*. He is a wealthy *miles gloriosus* who holds Delia a virtual captive from the Tibullan lover. A second possibility is another rival. We know that the speaker worries about others and apparently has reason to since he hastens to remind Delia that the magic charm he has received from the *saga* will only work for him.

The third possibility is different: for, it has been argued that *ille* is also Tibullus himself. This is less implausible than it sounds. We know from the poet's own story of accompanying Messalla on campaign, recounted in 1.3, that from a dramatic point of view he fits the characterization of *ille* at least as much as Delia's *coniunx* (Putnam 1973: ad loc; Kennedy 1993: 20). *Ille* on this reading would be an alienated vision of the Tibullan poetic self: an aspect of his existence at odds with his erotic and rural ideal. Furthermore, the poet's audience would have been able to savor the additional irony of knowing that Tibullus, the person, as opposed to his poetic persona, was a wealthy equestrian who really had indeed gone on campaign with his patron, Messalla. He was anything but a farmer sowing with his own hand or a *ianitor* chained to his mistress's door. Thus, in point of fact, this section functions on three levels simultaneously: 1. It is an attack on the poet's rival for his greed and heartlessness as opposed to the poet's espousal of simple rural virtues (a position hard to square with his being drunk in the city). 2. It serves as a statement of implicit regret for the poet's persona having at one point chosen the lifestyle he now attacks. From this perspective, the entire passage rather than enacting a dramatic scene represents an internal psychic conflict. 3. It opens an ironic metanarrative, as the poet's own lifestyle is seen to undercut the claims of his persona. Yet the narrator of the fictive world also expresses a utopian critique of the poet's actual existence, so that the "real" and fictive each come to counter the claims of the other, while providing no single logical center from which all such claims can be deduced.

Poem 2.3

In poem 2.3, Tibullus's world gets turned upside down. In Book 1 there is a recurring fantasy of rural ease as an antidote to the corruptions of greed, war and the city. Admittedly, that fantasy is often juxtaposed with or undercut by images of amorous desire in an urban setting that border on the masochistic: death, humiliation, and

castration. Nonetheless, the fantasy of rural ease and of a return to simplicity is an important motif in the story of Tibullus and Delia. In Book 2, the dream of the Golden Age has become a nightmare, most clearly symbolized by the name of the poet's new beloved, Nemesis. Where in 1.1 the poet dreams of being a simple farmer whose vats overflow with rich must, in 2.3, driven by jealousy, he will follow his beloved to the country estate of his rival where he will undergo the ultimate in humiliation and become a field slave. Where in 1.1 he will plant fruit trees with an "easy hand," in 2.3 his "soft" hands will be sunburned and blistered from the unaccustomed work:

o ego, cum aspicerem dominam, quam fortiter illic
uersarem ualido pingue bidente solum
agricolaeque modo curuum sectarer aratrum,
dum subigunt steriles arua serenda boues!
nec quereretur quod sol graciles exureret artus,
laederet et teneras pussula rupta manus.

(2.3.5–10)

[O since I might spy my mistress, how bravely there
would I turn the rich soil with a two-pronged hoe.
and follow the curved plough just like a farmer
while sterile steers drive deep the furrows for seeding.
Nor would I complain because the sun burnt my thin limbs
and the broken blister hurt my tender hands.]

Ironically, of course, the newfound realism of the Tibullan countryside does anything but ground it in reality. This new image is every bit as much a fantasy construction as the previous one.

The poet admits as much by directly modulating from the realistic detail of the opening into the longest and most complex mythological exemplum in the Tibullan corpus. Here, Apollo, stricken by love of Admetus, becomes a slave on his farm. To the shame of his divine sister, Diana (aka Delia, cf. Vergil, *Ecl.* 7.29), he teaches the locals how to make cheese, weaves wicker baskets, and is seen carrying lost calves home.

tunc fiscella leui detexta est uimine iunci,
raraque per nexus est uia facta sero.
o quotiens illo uitulum gestante per agros
dicitur occurrens erubuisse soror!
o quotiens ausae, caneret dum ualle sub alta,
rumpere mugitu carmina docta boues!

(2.3.15–20)

[Then a basket was woven with a light switch of reed
and a thin path opened through the knots for the whey.
O, how many times, when he was carrying a calf through the fields,
is his sister said to have blushed when she met him!
O, how many times did cattle dare, while he sang deep in a valley,
to interrupt his learned song with their lowing!]

The willing humiliation Apollo suffers for his love of Admetus is called to serve as precedent for Tibullus' imagined abjection. But the passage is multilayered. On one level, the comedy of the cattle's lowing interrupting the song of the god underlines the absurdity of the situation in which both the poet and Apollo find themselves. Yet, what is ironic comedy on one level is poetic program on another: for the poetry Apollo sings is no rustic ditty, but learned verse (*carmina docta*). *Doctus* is, of course, a code word for Alexandrian learning, and Tibullus's use here of a specifically Callimachean erotic version of the tale of Apollo's subjection (cf. *Hymn to Apollo*, 47–54), which had been told in a very different manner by Hesiod (*fr.* 54 M–W), shows precisely that. The sophistication of the Tibullan poetic project is announced, even as the poet's abjection and *rusticitas* are proclaimed.

But this is not the whole story. The *rarae uiae* of the rustic cheese basket are themselves a further allusion to Apollo's admonition to Callimachus, in the preface to his *Aitia*, to avoid the common track and stick to "untraveled paths" (*keleuthous atriptous*), though the course he runs may be "more narrow" (*steinoterén*) (*fr.* 1.28). This famous passage is part of a longer programmatic statement by Callimachus on the virtues of the slender style and the need to avoid the puffed up, the overblown, and the jejune. Thus, on the literal level, the poet seems in this passage to be justifying his own fantasized self-abasement by citing the precedent of Apollo, but on a metapoetic level he is demonstrating exactly the opposite. He concludes this section by noting that Apollo has now become the subject of gossip (*fabula*), but whoever is in love with a girl would rather be the subject of gossip than a god without love.

The next series of couplets plays a kind of fugue on the theme of *praeda* or "loot," contrasting the poet with his wealthy rival and his ill-gotten gain. Yet after a series of reflections on the unnatural excesses that the pursuit of wealth has led to among the Roman elite — oversized mansions and gigantic fishponds — the poet stages an abrupt about face. If Nemesis demands luxury, then let the floodgates open!

heu heu diuitibus uideo gaudere puellas:
 iam ueniant praedae, si Venus optat opes:
 ut mea luxuria Nemesis fluat utque per urbem
 incedat donis conspicienda meis.
 illa gerat uestes tenues, quas femina Coa
 texuit, auratas disposuitque uias:
 illi sint comites fusci, quos India torret
 Solis et admotis inficit ignis equis:
 illi selectos certent praebere colores
 Africa puniceum purpureumque Tyros.
 (2.3.49–58)

[Alas, alas, I see girls love riches.

Then let the loot come, if Venus wants wealth,
 so my Nemesis may float in luxury, so through the city
 she may progress, a sight to see by my largesse.
 Let her wear the see-through cloaks a Coan woman
 wove and decorated with paths of gold:
 Let her companions be dusky, baked brown in India

dyed by the fire of the sun, its horses brought near.
 Let them struggle to offer her chosen colors,
 Africa its scarlet, Tyre its purple.]

The *rarae uiae* of Apollo's cheese basket have become the gilded stripes (*auratae uiae*) of Nemesis's Coan cloak. In this one poem, the poet moves from a newfound realism that repudiates the Golden Age mythology subtending Book One, to a comic mythological excursus that doubles as a metapoetic manifesto, to an indictment of luxury and its corrosive effects on love and the traditional Roman elite, and then to a nullification of that indictment and an embrace of luxury if that is the price of love. It is a bravura performance but hardly a model of self-consistency. Ovid is capable of making these kinds of about-faces between poems within a single collection (*Amores* 1.4 and 2.5, or 2.19 and 3.4), and sometimes between immediately juxtaposed pairs of poems (2.7 and 2.8). But Ovid's individual poems normally present relatively consistent, if often hilariously perverse, arguments that are then ironically contrasted with one another on a larger intertextual level. What makes Tibullus so baffling, so dreamlike, is the way these juxtapositions and ironic overturnings often happen within the text of a single poem, making the identification of a single position – whether physical, ideological, or personal – from which the poetic subject speaks all but impossible.

Conclusion

In the end, Tibullus challenges our very notion of what a poem is. For him, and for the ancients who appreciated him, a poem is neither a single speech act nor the imitation of a single speech act. It is not a logical or rhetorical argument, or the imitation of such. It is rather, to use a metaphor offered earlier, a kind of garland: a series of statements, exclamations, and descriptions, each enchained with the next, but not emanating from a single center. The identity and interrelation between those utterances is sequential and serial rather than totalizing. The utterances do not presume, in short, the existence of a subjective essence that stands apart from each poem and endows it with meaning in a univocal fashion, but rather they produce a progression of meanings, of emotional colorings, of reflections and ironic undercuttings that come to constitute the text itself. They ask us to believe not that Tibullus should read more the way we prefer to imagine Ovid, but rather they demand that we rethink the status of the speaking subject in Roman erotic elegy and, perhaps, poetry as a whole. They ask us to imagine if Propertius, in fact, should not really read more like Tibullus than we have dared to suppose.

FURTHER READING

The modern study of Tibullus begins with Bright's *Haec mihi fingebam* (1978) and Cairns's *Tibullus: A Hellenistic Poet at Rome* (1979). Each in its own way strives to make the case for Tibullan artistry, Bright through a more traditional close reading of the poems and Cairns through

tracing the Hellenistic origins of the poet's art. Maltby's 2002 commentary is the most complete and up to date in English.

Among books not devoted exclusively to Tibullus, Duncan Kennedy's *Arts of Love* (1993) offers provocative readings of the complexity and overdetermination of the Tibullan persona. Paul Veyne's chapter "The Pastoral in City Clothes" in *Roman Erotic Elegy* helps to situate Tibullus' fantasy of rural ease in its larger generic and literary context, allowing us to make connections with Vergil and Gallus (1988). Sharon James's *Learned Girls and Male Persuasion* is fundamental for anyone wishing to understand the role of the *puella* in elegy (2003). She makes a persuasive case that Delia should be viewed primarily as a *meretrix*.

My article "The Tibullan Dream Text" (1999) and David Wray's rejoinder (2003) offer an interesting perspective on contemporary postmodern and psychoanalytic readings of the poet. They have been profitably compared recently by Ellen Oliensis (2009). There is, of course, a vast bibliography in languages other than English.

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CHAPTER 5

Ovid

Alison R. Sharrock

par erat inferior uersus; risisse Cupido
dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem.
(*Am.* 1.1.3–4)

The lower verse was equal; Cupid is said to have laughed and to have snatched away one foot.
(All translations are my own.)

uenit odoratos Elegia nexa capillos,
et, puto, pes illi longior alter erat.
forma decens, uestis tenuissima, uultus amantis,
et pedibus uitium causa decoris erat.
(*Am.* 3.1.7–10)

Elegy came, her perfumed hair tied up, and, I think, one of her feet was longer. Her appearance was beautiful, her clothing of the finest, her face that of a lover, and the fault in her feet was a cause of beauty.

The Ovidian corpus begins with an act of vandalism by the god of Love against the poet's attempts to write in continuous hexameters (equal lines of six metrical feet) and thus in the lofty vein of epic: Cupid steals a foot from every second line and forces the poet into a different mode. This action turned out, despite the poet's protestations, to be a *felix culpa* (a happy fault), since it inaugurated Ovid's lifelong love affair with the elegiac couplet (hexameter alternating with five-footed pentameter). Apart from one tragedy, a *Medea*, of which all but a single line is lost, and one great foray into epic, a 15-book compendium of mythology and poem on change called the *Metamorphoses*, all Ovid's substantial output is written in the elegiac metre and is therefore, according to

the Roman conventions of poetic propriety (*materia conueniente modis*, “with material appropriate to the metre”, *Amores* (hereafter *Am.*) 1.1.2), inevitably affected by the generic expectations of elegy. The corpus begins with the *Amores*, love poems in the tradition of Gallus, Propertius, and Tibullus, with which this chapter will be mostly concerned. From this beginning derives a range of elegiac experiments (Hinds 1992, Harrison 2002), which develop the genre in different directions, importing hybrid vigour from other genres and stretching the capabilities of the elegiac couplet.

From around the same time as the *Amores* come the *Heroides*, unframed letters from mythical heroines abandoned by their lovers, in which the poet’s own voice is wholly subsumed within that of the heroine. The exploration of intense emotion, erotic and romantic grief, introspection and personal feelings given precedence over political and social concerns – all these belong as well to conventional elegy as they do to the *Heroides* experiment. Even the use of myth has plenty of precedent in elegy, where the beloved might be compared with an abandoned Ariadne or some other heroine of myth (Propertius 1.2, 1.3, 1.15, 2.28; Hardie 2005), such that we might think of these heroines as waking up from the poet’s elegiac dream and speaking for themselves (Spentzou 2003). New, however, is the extent and range of this collection’s strong intertexts from outside elegy: Penelope writes at the very moment in the *Odyssey* when Odysseus has entered the palace and is about to make her dreams come true (Kennedy 1984); Dido is about to kill herself with Aeneas’ sword, but hints that Virgil’s hopeless dream of a *paruulus Aeneas* (‘baby Aeneas’) might actually be growing inside her, while all the grandeur of the Roman mission is so much trash by comparison with her love and her grief; both Hypsipyle (from Apollonius’ *Argonautica*) and Medea (between Apollonius and Euripides’ iconic tragedy) have words to say to Jason. The form of the collection itself, however, owes something also to the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, which tells the stories of heroines in the form of an expanded list (Hardie 2005, 292–3, Hinds 1999).

Roman elegy already had a didactic strand (erotodidactic: teaching love), for example in Tibullus 1.4, on which Ovid could draw for his next great innovation. This was a combination of the metre, style, and subject matter of elegy with the purpose, conventions, characters, and pretensions of didactic poetry, which was usually written in hexameters and with something of the seriousness of epic. Most important for Ovid was Virgil’s *Georgics*, a four-book poem on farming published some 30 years before Ovid’s didactic foray, together with the *Georgics*’ own crucial intertext, Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura*, a late Republican poem which teaches the ethics and physics of Epicureanism. The first founder of this tradition is again Hesiod, with his poem on farming, the *Works and Days*, and his poem on the nature of the world understood through the generations of the gods, the *Theogony*. The great joke which Ovid plays with this tradition is the absurdity of the idea that love could be taught. And yet, as with so many acts of Ovidian outrage, the poet shows quite clearly that it is by no means absurd: if we can learn to care for animals we can learn to care for the self; if we can learn to manage and control our behaviour and that of others in accordance with the tenets of traditional wisdom then we can learn to manage a relationship; if we can learn to be good citizens then we can also learn to be bad citizens, for all that he claims – disingenuously – that his flirtatious and potentially adulterous advice is not for married women. The didactic group has three parts: a fragment on cosmetics for women (*Medicamina Faciei Femineae*), three books of *Ars*

Amatoria, the first two of which teach a young man how to catch and keep a girl while the third does the same for women; and finally the *Remedia Amoris*, which purports to teach you how to get out of the mess in which your fledgling erotic skills may have landed you.

The poetic family of Roman elegy counts among its ancestors the aetiological poetry of the Hellenistic scholar poets, most especially the *Aetia* of Callimachus (see Hunter in this volume). Propertius experimented with elegiac explorations of origins in his fourth book, but it was Ovid who developed the idea into a work of a scale and significance to rival that of the master. Like Propertius, Ovid saw the opportunity to use this elegiac tradition as a vehicle for poetry on Roman themes which would be an alternative to the expected and much refused epic. Ovid structured his aetiological elegy around the Roman calendar of festivals and important political/religious moments of the year. His *Fasti* consists of six books, one for each of the first six months of the year, in which he delves into the origins of contemporary festivals, sometimes seeking the authority of divine interlocutors, sometimes faced with a range of possible explanations none of which commands obvious assent. As such, the poem may well reflect the experience of the contemporary audience when faced with the rituals and practices of Roman religion, since it is clear that by historical times the purpose and meaning of many rites was already obscure. Whatever the reason why only half the projected 12-book poem exists, it is surely provocative that the poet, now in exile because of some offence against the increasingly tyrannical Augustus, breaks off before the two most Julian months of the calendar, July and August. The extent to which one can see an effective continuity between this poem and conventional Roman love elegy, other than by the intertextual link of Propertius and Callimachus, remains a subject for debate, but it is now generally accepted, at least, that there is generic clear water between the *Fasti* and its near-contemporary the *Metamorphoses*, for all the playfulness and eroticism of the epic against all the relative seriousness and maturity of the elegiac poem (Hinds 1987).

Ovid's final experiment in developing the elegiac genre came as a result of his exile (or rather, as he reminds us, relegation, which did not include loss of possessions and civic status) to Tomi, on the shores of the Black Sea, in 8 CE. The exile poetry consists of three collections: five books of *Tristia*, whose title "sad things" alludes to the supposed etymology of elegy from *e-legein*, "to say alas"; four books of *Epistulae ex Ponto*, letters from Pontus (the Roman province in which his place of exile was to be found), which allude to his early experiment in elegiac letters, the *Heroides*, or *Epistulae Heroidum*; and a magnificent piece of excessive invective called the *Ibis*, after an invective poem of the same name by Callimachus. Although the exilic works are emphatically not young man's poetry, as would be a generic necessity of conventional love elegy, while the poet is at pains to show that there is nothing erotic (honest!) about his latest elegiac work, nonetheless some elegiac themes have mutated rather than disappeared (Harrison 2002, 90–2). Exclusion from the house (and body) of the beloved has become exclusion from Rome; the role of elegiac *puella* is now shared, between on the one hand Ovid's wife, who acts as a respectable version of the disreputable and potentially adulterous mistress, and on the other hand the hardhearted Augustus who must be wooed, coaxed, and entreated to allow the poet in from the cold. Stalking the entire collection is the ghost of the *Ars Amatoria*, the pretext for the poet's relegation and now repeatedly rejected, apologised for, and explained away – or rather, perhaps, celebrated. The second book of

the *Tristia* contains a single poem, a reprise of the didactic mode of the *Ars Amatoria*, which it seeks to defend. Ovid's instruction of the Emperor in how to read poetry (Barchiesi 2001) draws also on Horace's epistle to Augustus (*Epistles* 2.1) on the nature of poetry, while its outrageous aim, in part, is to "prove" that all literature, even Augustus' favoured *Aeneid*, is about sex. For all that Ovid presents his exilic project as an inversion of everything that went before, even down to a dishevelled Cupid who comes to comfort the poet only to be upbraided for his role in the entire elegiac enterprise (*Pont.* 3.3.30), nonetheless the poems from exile represent the final experiment in Ovidian elegy. Many scholars think that the double *Heroides*, letters between both sides of a couple, are themselves also works from exile.

When Ovid took up the mantle of Roman love elegy, it had already seen intensive active service from Gallus, Propertius, and Tibullus, not to mention its precursor Catullus. It was, to change the metaphor, well formed. Erotic discourse has never been a matter of spontaneous creation from nowhere, or from the individual heart (Barthes 1979), but in the case of Roman elegy the building blocks were by now well positioned, such that the poetry was constructed out of established images and scenes (*topoi*) which the poet could manipulate to his own ends. As a discourse predicated on opposition to conventional lifestyles, elegy presented itself as the product of leisure as opposed to business, laziness and self-indulgence as opposed to hard work and duty, personal pleasure (even when it comes in the form of erotic pain) as opposed to patiently endured pain for the sake of the state.

Since the ideology and much of the reality of Roman society was military, the image of the soldier presented itself to the elegists as a vehicle for both appropriation and inversion (Gale 1997). One of Ovid's most famous and outrageous poems, *Am.* 1.9, 'proves' point by point the essential connection between the soldier and the lover (the phrase *militat omnis amans*, "every lover is a soldier", opens and closes the first couplet, 1.9.1–2), whether through youthful age (3–6), endurance (15–16), night-time activity (21–26), or the capacity to slip past guards (27–8). Ovid even inverts the normal language of elegiac poetic production, laziness, leisure and softness (41–2), as applying not to his current state of erotic and elegiac activity but to his previous state before Love made him active: *agilem nocturnaque bella gerentem* ("active and engaged in nightly battles", 45). The language of Roman military, political and social activity (*agilis* from *ago*) has become a barely veiled euphemism for sexual prowess. The other side to the metaphor of *militia amoris* (soldiering of love), however, presents the lover not as the soldier himself but as the victim of a military alliance between Cupid and the beloved (Prop. 1.1.1–4). Ovid engages with this image playfully in *Am.* 1.2, when he capitulates with unseemly haste to the arrows and torches of Cupid, to be led in triumph through the streets of Rome by the god as conquering general; and also more painfully in *Am.* 2.9, when the wounds inflicted by Cupid become a metaphor for the sufferings of love, with the essential paradox of *militia amoris* expressed through the complaint:

quid me, qui miles numquam tua signa reliqui,
laedis, et in castris uulneror ipse meis?
(*Am.* 2.9.3–4)

Why do you harm me, I who as a soldier have never left your standards, and why am I myself wounded in my camp?

Another essential prop in the construction of Roman society is the slave, on whom not only do the economy and the daily lives of the elite depend but also against whom the social identity of citizens is defined. It should be no surprise, therefore, that slavery provides a central image in elegiac discourse, in which the normal power relations of conventional society are inverted, such that the male, socially and politically elite lover subordinates himself to a woman who is his inferior in every way (however exactly we choose to construe her social position). In addition, the realities of slave life provide a metaphorical vehicle for expression of the lover's emotions of suffering, hurt, pain, and loss of control (McCarthy 1998). The imagistic nexus of *seruitium amoris* (slavery of love) had been so extensively developed by Propertius and Tibullus that Ovid does not give it the expansive treatment that he applies to *militia*. *Am.* 2.17 opens with a clear signal towards a treatment of the image:

Si quis erit, qui turpe putet seruire puellae,
illo conuincar iudice turpis ego.

(*Am.* 2.17.1–2)

If there is anyone who thinks it foul to be a slave to a girl, by his judgement I shall be convicted of foulness.

As the poem develops, however, it is not so much a blow-by-blow account to show how every lover is a slave (in the manner of soldiering in *Am.* 1.9), but rather an exploration of the pose of inferiority as seductive rhetoric. Examples of goddesses who loved heroic mortals, such as Calypso (Odysseus), Thetis (Peleus), and the prophetic nymph Egeria (the mythical Roman king Numa) are offered as persuasion to Corinna as to why she should love the poet. The culminating example is Venus and Vulcan, perhaps not an entirely happy precedent given Vulcan's marital difficulties. If we note that these examples of unequally matched couples not only draw on the elegiac tradition of deifying the beloved but also place the poet-lover in a heroic role, we might also consider that the role of Vulcan as creative artist makes him a more suitable comparandum for the poet than do his erotic credentials. From there it is only a small step to another unequal couple, the elegiac couplet (21–2), artistically limping like Vulcan himself. The poem which began in self-humiliation ends as a celebration of poetic power, in which the poet-lover holds all the most desirable cards (Gold 1993, Wyke 2002), while the beloved is left even without knowledge of her own identity:

noui aliquam, quae se circumferat esse Corinnam;
ut fiat, quid non illa dedisse uelit?

(*Am.* 2.17.29–30)

I know someone who puts it about that she is Corinna; what would she not give actually to be so?

In 2.17, Ovid has hinted at exposure of the lie which is at the heart of *seruitium amoris* and its claims of self-abasement. The Cypassis poems, 2.7 and 2.8, explore something closer to the reality of slavery and love, when the poet-lover first hotly denies the charge of having betrayed Corinna by sex with her slave-hairdresser, and then blackmails the unhappy girl into more sex on pain of exposure to all too real

slave punishments (Henderson 1991). It is this diptych which puts on show the scarred back (2.7.22) and the powerlessness (2.8.21–4) of the literal slave. When it comes to passing on erotic knowledge to the next generation, the teacher of the *Ars Amatoria* has extensive instructions on how to play the role of slave for the purposes of keeping your beloved sweet (*Ars* 2.179–242). His recipe for success (2.199–202) clearly signals its affinities with the manipulative programme of the parasites and powerful slaves of Roman comedy, the characters who are always in control (James 2003). The Ovidian erotic slave never allows his pose of humility and powerlessness too close a brush with social realities.

A defining *topos* of elegy is the paraclausithyron, the song of the locked-out lover (Tib. 1.2, Prop. 1.16). Ovid stakes his claim to a place on the elegiac doorstep with a full-scale exploration of this *topos* in *Am.* 1.6, a poem in which the unusual inclusion of a refrain (*tempora noctis eunt; excute poste seram*, “the hours of the night are passing; undo the bolt from the door”, 40, 48, 56) alludes to the ancestry of the paraclausithyron in Roman door magic (cf. Plautus *Curculio* 147–55) as well as in the *komos* of Greek epigram. Development and variation of the image comes in a range of forms: in *Am.* 3.6 the barrier which needs to be crossed is not a door but a river which, once small (3.6.5), has now become a raging torrent (7–8), with tempting metaphorical hints both at swelling poetry (at 106 lines long, this poem is itself somewhat swollen) and at sexual potency. Just as the closedness of the girl who is the real object of the paraclausithyron is displaced on to the door by elegiac convention and then on to the doorkeeper by Ovid (*Am.* 1.6), so now the personified river becomes the recipient of the poet-lover’s seductive rhetoric. Elsewhere, the *topos* of exclusion evokes its programmatic force for elegiac poetry in just a few words: in *Am.* 3.8, which explores the traditional idea that poetry does not get the rewards it deserves, even the praised poet has the door shut in his face (3.8.7); in the explicitly programmatic *Am.* 2.1, in which elegy is the magic spell which aims to soften the hard doors of the beloved (22), the poet’s attempts at writing epic were brought quickly back down to elegiac earth when *clausit amica fores* (“my girlfriend closed the door”, 17). Ovid excuses himself to Jupiter, whose battle with the giants he had just been re-enacting, with the claim that the closed door of elegy has more poetic power (20). In *Am.* 3.11, the poet-lover finds himself again in the classic elegiac position on the doorstep (9–12), where he makes explicit the extent to which erotic rivalry relates not only to competition in the achievement of the desired object but also to prestige and status in the battle with other males:

uidi, cum foribus lassus prodiret amator
 inualidum referens emeritumque latus;
 hoc tamen est leuius quam quod sum uisus ab illo:
 eueniat nostris hostibus ille pudor.

(*Am.* 3.11.13–16)

I have seen the exhausted lover coming out from the door, dragging along his knackered side into retirement; but this is easier to bear than the fact that I have been seen by him: may such shame come to our enemies.

Other elegiac *topoi* given particularly Ovidian treatment include the following: the living metaphor of love as magic, especially in *Am.* 1.8, 2.1, *Ars* 2.99 (cf. Prop. 1.1.1, 1.2.19,

4.5; Tib. 1.2.59–64; (Sharrock 1994)); the rare celebration of erotic success, especially in *Am.* 1.5, 2.12, 2.15 (cf. Prop. 1.8b, 2.15); the beloved girl's unfortunate vice of materialism, for example in *Am.* 1.10 (cf. Prop. 1.2; Tib. 2.4; James 2003); the (related) problems of fidelity and faithfulness (cf. Prop. 1.15; Tib. 1.2), for example in *Am.* 1.4, 2.4, 3.3, 3.11, 3.14, and manipulated in both directions in *Ars* 2, when the teacher explains the advantages of both hiding and exposing one's infidelities; and competition from a rich rival, like the one in *Am.* 3.8 whose war-bought wealth gives him access where Ovid's poems fail. But is it possible for us to characterise "love" in Ovid's elegy other than by calling it elegiac?

It is easy to be cynical about the view of love presented in Ovid's *Amores*, and still more so in the *Ars Amatoria*. After all, we have here a lover and a teacher whose main aim is to get himself and his pupil into bed with their chosen girl as easily as possible (*Ars* 1.453), with no intention of restricting himself to just one girl (*di melius!*, as the teacher exclaims in horror at such a suggestion, *Ars* 2.388); whose vaunted devotion (*Am.* 1.3.5–6) is not only self-seeking but also not above both physical and sexual violence (*Am.* 1.7, *Ars* 1.673); and whose pose of servitude and almost religious admiration does not preclude moralistic preaching, with more than a hint of Schadenfreude (*Am.* 1.14, 2.14). Perhaps we might want to say, then, that this "love" is not romantic or "sincere", but is undoubtedly erotic and has a certain kind of realism. On the other hand, Ovid goes further than the conventions of Latin love poetry in exploring the range of emotional experience as a fact of life. It is a new idea, and perhaps almost impossible to develop in the "lyric" (in the modern, rather than the ancient generic sense, P. A. Miller 1994) voice of conventional elegy, to explore the question of how to make love last (*ut ... duret amor*, *Ars* 1.38). Tibullus might have dreamt of himself and Delia as a white-haired couple faithful to the end (Tib. 1.6.86), but in context it is an obvious absurdity. Only Ovid gives advice on how one might behave in order to keep the relationship going, *nec te mirere relictum* ("and not to find, to your surprise, that you've been left," *Ars* 2.111).

But is not this "love" which Ovid teaches and preaches a bit basic, something of a letdown from the emotional intensity of his predecessors in Latin love poetry? *Am.* 3.11(a+b) (Perkins 2001–2002, Cairns 1979, Ferguson 1960, Damon 1990) is a lover's cry of pain at his beloved's hardness of heart, infidelity, and ingratitude for his unfailing devotion. His patience is at an end, he claims, and he no longer cares – which, as always in erotic discourse, means its opposite. The poem is also an engagement with a poetic tradition, drawing on a Catullan moment (*perfer, obdura*, "endure, be firm", Cat. 8.11; cf. *perfer et obdura*, *Am.* 3.11.7, both phrases followed by a series of questions which undermine the speaker's obduracy), and then in the second half developing the famous paradox of Cat. 85, *odi et amo* ("I hate and I love") and the agony it brings. Intertwined with these two iconic Catullan poems are also two flashpoints of Propertian emotion: captivating eyes (*Am.* 3.11.48 and Prop. 1.1.1, supported also by the inversion at *Am.* 3.11.5 of Prop. 1.1.4, trampling on the head of love/the lover), and the notion of the beloved as everything to the lover (*Am.* 3.11.49 and Prop. 2.6.42). It would be easy to accuse Ovid of simplification (or parody) of his predecessors' complex emotional states, especially when he turns Catullus' torment at his conflicting feelings of love and hate into a simple mind-body dichotomy (*Am.* 3.11.37: *nequitiam fugio, fugientem forma reducit*, "I run from her wickedness, her beauty draws me back as I flee"). A reprise of the paradox comes at:

tunc amo, tunc odi frustra, quod amare necesse est;
 tunc ego, sed tecum, mortuus esse uelim.
 (*Am.* 3.14.39–40)

Then I love, then in vain I hate, because it is necessary to love; then I want to be dead, but with you.

In part this is an extension of the pleasures involved in erotic pain, as exemplified in the lover's refusal to take up the god's offer of a loveless life (*Am.* 2.9b) and in his requirement that his rival should make things difficult for him:

quo mihi fortunam, quae numquam fallere curet?
 nil ego quod nullo tempore laedat amo.
 (*Amores*, 2.19.7–8)

What use to me is fortune which never cares to deceive? I don't love anything which never hurts.

We need to separate the question of whether this is good love from whether it is good poetry: there has been a strong tradition of literary criticism which associates good poetry with intense emotion (often, by implication, emotion of which the critic approves, although most people would insist that this is not necessary) and on this score Ovid has been found wanting. I suggest, however, first, that it is possible to read poems like 3.11 as intense (albeit, indeed, misguided) emotion and as parodic at the same time, on different levels, and, moreover, that Ovid's entanglement with the poetic tradition and exposure of its potential for shallowness forms part of his poetic-erotic program in the elegiac works – which is that you never quite know how to take it.

Romantic notions of love would put a high premium on sincerity and truthfulness, “real love” not something faked, but both the *Amores* and the *Ars Amatoria* are obsessed with faking and not telling the truth. We might not feel that this adds up to the kind of love which we would personally endorse (at least, I don't), but that it involves a high degree of emotional complexity and intensity is harder to deny. Could it be, even, that Ovid is suggesting that the artificiality of poetry makes sincerity impossible? A strand runs through the erotic corpus which plays with the question of knowledge, interspersing exposure and concealment which tempt and seduce the reader into wanting to know, but ultimately deny that possibility. The first relational poem of the collection, *Am.* 1.4, the adulterous dinner party, plays this out. It presents a scenario in which the “truth” is to be hidden from the beloved's official partner; supposedly private communication takes place through the well-known and conventional system of lovers' signs (writing in wine on the table, drinking from the cup from which the lover has drunk, “secret” meanings in ordinary actions); the poet-lover threatens to expose himself as *manifestus amator* (“an open lover”, 39); there is a suspicion of sex in public hidden under a cloak; and it culminates in the lover's fantasy about the private space of the bedroom. He tells his mistress not to yield to her *uir* in bed, or only unwillingly, not to give him pleasure, or at least not to take pleasure herself, and finally – whatever happens, to deny it tomorrow. That Ovidian sting in the tail is close to the

essence of the program – we don't and can't know. The next poem taunts us with a similar challenge when the description of a sex scene cuts out at the moment of consummation with the provocative *cetera quis nescit?* ("Who does not know the rest?", 1.5.25). But the crowning glory of hiding and exposure comes in *Am.* 3.12, which is a multiple bluff on the question of whether Corinna is a real person. Ovid upbraids the naive reader who takes his celebration of his mistress for truth and so falls in love with her himself. On the one hand, this poem is "telling" us that Corinna is not a real person (or rather, that we *should think* that Corinna is not a real person), but on the other hand the speaker's purpose in telling us this is to keep Corinna for himself (which implies that she *is* a real person). It is of the essence of this poetry that we should not know.

What can we know about the "self" who speaks these poems? What is the relationship between the poet, the poet-lover, and the lover? What is the relationship between (the speaker of) one poem and another? These are questions which are constantly at play in the *Amores* and throughout the Ovidian corpus (Volk 2005). Like other Augustan poetry books (Hutchinson 2008), the *Amores* do not tell any straightforward quasi-autobiographical narrative, no simple story of lover and beloved meeting, desiring, consummating, fighting, and parting. Rather, the arrangement of poems owes as much to patterning as it does to linearity. On the other hand, traces of such a love story lurk beneath the surface, tempting the reader into the construction of narrative, and playing to the desire for story with which we necessarily approach these first person poems (Sharrock 2000 and 2006; Liveley and Salzman-Mitchell 2008). Each book opens with a strongly programmatic statement: 1.1 with Cupid's metrical vandalism, 2.1 with the poet's attempts at writing an epic on gods and giants being undermined by the closed door of elegy, 3.1 with a competition between personified Tragedy and Elegy for the poet's allegiance. Each second poem, however, answers the overt poetics of its respective opener with a narrative of beginnings: 1.2 with the poet discovering himself unaccountably in love (although he should hardly have been surprised, since in the previous poem Cupid's arrow shot him with the right kind of *opus* (work) for elegy; Kennedy 1993); 2.2 with an exploratory communication to a new beloved, by means of an intermediary; and 3.2 with a dramatic-monologue account of a scene of initial chatting-up at the races. By contrast, already by poem 1.4 the lover appears to be in a well established, albeit illicit, relationship with the *puella*, while 1.5 plunges us straight into the middle of an affair with the most erotic and the most relaxed sex scene in Roman poetry. The collection offers us the possibility of envisaging an overall narrative in which the poet-lover, Ovid, is involved in several affairs, serially and simultaneously, which we might even be tempted to try to unpick. At the same time, there is the possibility of reading each poem as a unit by itself, independent of others.

Throughout the collection Ovid tries on a range of erotic and emotional roles which he will not let us beat into the shape of a single simple story able to be attached to a unified individual (P. A. Miller 2004). On the other hand, Ovid's first-person self-presentation is a Big Self whose presence can be felt across the entire corpus, tempting the reader to identify his various *personae* as the same person. Although few people now would read the lover of the *Amores* straightforwardly as Ovid the poet, and indeed some people want to see the teacher of the *Ars Amatoria* as a bumbling old fool who is satirised by Ovid

the poet (Durling 1958), nonetheless this Big Self stretches between works. *Am.* 1.7 expresses the lover's wild grief at having attacked his beloved, his real (lack of) concern for whom slips out in his final callous invitation to her to cover the evidence by tidying up her hair. We might see this as a satire on the typical elegiac position of self-absorption and casual violence, with Ovid the poet standing apart from the speaker. But in the *Ars Amatoria* the teacher offers his own experience (*Ars* 2.173) to warn his pupils of the dangers of angry girls, using precisely this poem as his own past.

At no stage in the history of Roman love elegy is it a straightforward task to distinguish between (the poetic expression of) love for another person and love for poetry, but with Ovid the traditional slippage between mistress and metaphor (Wyke 2002, Keith 1994) reaches new levels of complexity – alongside the outrageous quasi-simplification which reduces love to a matter of metre (1.1) and makes the personification of Elegy into an elegiac mistress (3.1). The joke with which Ovid flirts throughout the erotic corpus is a metaphorical equivalence of loving and writing, *amare* and *scribere*: even in the supposed recantation, *Remedia Amoris*, the poet programmatically defends himself against Cupid's accusations of infidelity to his cause with the claim that right now he is in love:

saepe tepent alii iuuenes; ego semper amaui,
et si, quid faciam, nunc quoque, quaeris, amo.
(*Rem. Am.* 7–8)

Other young men often cool off; I have always been a lover, and if you ask what I'm doing now also – I'm loving.

What he is actually doing, right now, is writing. (Cf. the same idea at *Am.* 2.1.7, *quo nunc ego saucius arcu*, "wounded by the same bow as I am now".) The equivalence between writing and loving is developed to an amusing, if outrageous, degree when Ovid reflects on his experience of impotence (writer's block?), in *Am.* 3.7. I have argued elsewhere (Sharrock 1995) that this unusually sexually explicit poem is a reflection on the nature of writing love elegy and its inherent threats to masculinity. As the poet writes, his *pars pessima* (69) is right now up to the task:

quae nunc ecce uigent intempestiua ualentque,
nunc opus exposcunt militiamque suam.
(*Am.* 3.7.67–68)

... now look it's vigorous and full of valour at the wrong moment, now it demands its work and military action.

Very many of Ovid's love poems open themselves to such poetological readings, in which it is impossible to distinguish between the love of a girl and the love of poetry. *Am.* 2.4 and 2.10 both celebrate, albeit with an introductory pose of deprecation, the poet's capacity for love, in the former poem any girl in the whole city (2.4.47–8) and in the latter just two. Such a celebration of erotic sensibility and prowess has elegiac precedent, for example in Propertius 2.22a, but Ovid has taken further the poetological possibilities of the *topos*. From a programmatic point of view, a closer parallel with *Am.* 2.4 and 2.10 is Propertius 2.1, in which the poet

claims that the driving force for his poetry is his beloved. Whatever she wears and whatever she does creates a new poem:

QVAERITIS, unde mihi totiens scribantur amores,
unde meus ueniat mollis in ora liber.
non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo:
ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit.

(Prop. 2.1.1–4)

You ask whence my loves come so often to be written, why my book comes soft into my mouth. It is not Calliope, not Apollo, who sings these things to me: my girl herself is my inspiration.

seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu,
tum uero longas condimus Iliadas;
(Prop. 2.1.13–14)

Or if she struggles with me, naked, with cloak torn away, then indeed we compose long Iliads.

Propertius' opening reference to *amores* clearly applies to the title of elegiac collections (Gallus and Ovid, cf. *Am.* 2.4.9, and perhaps Propertius' own), while many of his words and images are poetologically suggestive, but Propertius maintains the reality effect, according to which the beloved is the *cause* of the poetry rather than the poetry itself. We might even say that *Am.* 2.4 and 2.10 do to the conventional image of the written girl, *scripta puella*, what *Am.* 1.9 does to that of *militia amoris*. 2.4 not only celebrates any girl as a possible love object, but pairs them together like a series of elegiac couplets. This pairing comes to a head at 2.4.33–6:

tu, quia tam longa es, ueteres heroidas aequas
et potes in toto multa iacere toro;
haec habilis breuitate sua est: corrumpor utraque;
conueniunt uoto longa brevisque meo.
(*Am.* 2.4.33–36)

You, because you are so tall, are like the heroines of old and can sprawl over the whole bed; this one is handleable in her littleness: I am tempted by both; both long and short is suited to my prayer.

Not only do the tall girl and the short girl clearly add up to an elegiac couplet, but together they cite two of Ovid's works: the *ueteres heroidas* allude to the *Heroides* while *conueniunt* offers an echo of the opening couplet of the *Amores* with its *materia conueniente modis* ("material appropriate to the metre").

Elegiac pairing is the object of Ovid's erotic interest also in *Am.* 2.10, this time in the form of just two girls. But this poem is really interested not so much in the girls (couplets, poems) themselves but in the lover's capacity to perform them. The poem culminates in a prayer to die on the job, *medium...inter opus* (2.10.36), which comes conveniently near to the middle of the three book collection of *Amores* (Kennedy 1993).

The period during which Ovid wrote erotic elegy saw significant developments in the relationship between Roman private life and the state. Augustus' moral legislation

promoted marriage, punished adulterers, and made it illegal for a husband to overlook his wife's infidelity, but the propaganda went further than the legislation in its encouragement of associations between sanctioned sexual behaviour and other aspects of good citizenship, including loyalty to the princeps himself. Interaction between this propaganda and the poetic values developed during the late Republic and early imperial period had the effect of constructing a space in which the elegiac position construed itself as countercultural. Even though there may be no inherent reason why the elegiac mode should not be engaged in the service of the Augustan state (as both Propertius and Ovid were to explore in their later elegiac developments), the building blocks readily presented themselves whereby the poets could fashion the choice of elegy as an oppositional political as well as poetic stance.

As is shown in Hunter's contribution to this volume, Ovid draws on the Callimachean pose of opposition between epic and lighter genres to set up the programme for his second book of elegies through a staged conflict between the epic battle of gods and giants and the elegiac paraclausithyron. The poet who had one moment been usurping the role of thundering Jupiter (according to the conceit whereby the poet does what he describes), the next moment drops his thunderbolt when his beloved closed the door:

in manibus nimbos et cum Ioue fulmen habebam,
 quod bene pro caelo mitteret ille suo.
 clausit amica fores: ego cum Ioue fulmen omisi;
 excidit ingenio Iuppiter ipse meo.
 Iuppiter, ignoscas: nil me tua tela iuuabant;
 clausa tuo maius ianua fulmen habet.

(*Am.* 2.1.15–20)

In my hands I had the clouds and along with Jove the thunderbolt which he well casts on behalf of his own heaven. My girlfriend closed the door: I dropped the thunderbolt along with Jove; Jupiter himself fell out of my mind. Forgive me, Jupiter: your weapons were no help to me; the closed door has a bigger bolt than yours.

Many critics find it irresistible to make a connection between "Jupiter" here and that Jupiter on earth, Augustus. In that case, we could charge Ovid first with usurping the Emperor's role, then with deserting him for a different allegiance, and finally with accusing him of (sexual) impotence, since his thunderbolt, now deemed smaller and weaker than the force of elegy, is clearly phallic.

Ovid's *Amores* make relatively few direct political allusions: one example is in the list of battles waged as a result of love, which culminates in reference to the civil war between Antony and Octavian (2.12.23–4, placing Cleopatra in the tradition of Helen and Lavinia), while the case against abortion includes the killer argument that if Venus had aborted Aeneas the world would have been denied the Caesars (*Am.* 2.14.17–18). More extensive, however, is the poet's countercultural self-positioning, such as that displayed in his representation of the triumph of Cupid in *Am.* 1.2 (Galinsky 1969, J. F. Miller 1995; see the essays by Leach and Welch in this volume). As elsewhere, Ovid starts with conventional ideas (*militia amoris*, the image of Cupid in a chariot), but develops them in outrageous ways. Respected Roman personifications, *Mens Bona*

(“Right Thinking”) and *Pudor* (“Shame/Modesty”), suffer the violence of the conquered, while the notions such as *Error* and particularly *Furor* (1.2.35), who really ought to have their hands tied behind their backs (Virg. *Aen.* 1.294–6), are promoted to the position of general’s guard. Finally, the triumph scene ends with an explicit connection between Cupid and his cousin Augustus. (Cupid’s mother Venus is the vaunted ancestor of the Julian family, through Aeneas’ son Iulus.) This is the period during which the celebration of a triumph came to be restricted to members of Augustus’ family (the last non-imperial full triumph was that of Lucius Cornelius Balbus in 19 BCE). But of course, since Cupid *is* a member of the imperial family, it is quite okay to him to have a triumph.

Ovid eventually got on the wrong side of the Augustan regime. It is important to stress, however, that it is not around a question of sexual obscenity that the political “problem” of Ovidian erotic elegy revolves. In this regard, Roman society maintains a fair degree of consistency over the centuries immediately before and after the publication of the *Ars Amatoria* in its lack of inhibition about the representation of sexuality, in art, literature, and indeed political invective. The “problem” for the elegists, and especially for Ovid, is twofold: first, the Romans, to generalise, don’t have a problem with sex, but do have a problem with love, which makes a man lose his self-control and perhaps also his ancestral material wealth; and, second, the Augustan attempts to control what we loosely call morality are bound up not so much with personal sexual values but with the stability and control of middle and upper-class society. Adultery is an offence which you (as a man) commit, not against your own wife, but against the husband of your lover. In addition, and therefore, sexual behaviour became a site for the imposition and contestation of Augustus’ authority.

It is in the didactic mode of the *Ars Amatoria* that the problems of authority are foregrounded (Sharrock 1994). Here, Ovid’s speaker is not just a bad lad playing around but a teacher in the tradition of Virgil’s *Georgics*, that celebration of the land of Italy in its reconstruction after the Civil Wars. It is suddenly all much more serious. There has always been ambiguity as to the social status of the elegiac *puella* and therefore to the position of the elegiac relationship vis-à-vis the Augustan marriage legislation, but the didactic voice is more direct, several notches closer to real life, further from a youthful *Musa iocosa* (“playful muse”) whom no one takes seriously, than is the case in straight elegy, such that an ambiguity of this nature is harder to maintain. Ovid is teaching his readers how to pursue relationships outside the Roman norms either of arranged marriage or paid prostitution (*hoc opus, hic labor est, primo sine munere iungi*, “this is the work, this is the task, to be joined together without an initial gift”, *Ars* 1.453, a quotation of the Virgilian entry to the underworld, *hoc opus, hic labor est, Aen.* 6.129). It now matters a great deal whether those relationships come under the jurisdiction of the Augustan legislation. Ovid makes a series of disclaimers in which he denies everything, such as that in the proem to *Ars* 1:

este procul, uitae tenues, insigne pudoris,
 quaeque tegis medios instita longa pedes:
 nos Venerem tutam concessaque furta canemus
 inque meo nullum carmine crimen erit.

(*Ars* 1.31–34)

Keep far away, slender ribbons, insignia of modesty, and you long dress covering to the toes: we will sing of safe Venus and permitted thefts and in my song there will be no cause for accusation.

But no one really believes him, especially not, as has been several times pointed out, since the letters of *crimen* fit neatly into those of *carmine* – there is indeed a crime/charge in Ovid’s song. Rather, we might feel, the disclaimers themselves call attention to the relevance of the Augustan legislation to Ovid’s poem. Another protestation of innocence mentions “law” explicitly:

en iterum testor: nihil hic nisi lege remissum
luditur; in nostris instita nulla iocis.

(*Ars* 2.599–600)

See, again I bear witness: there are no games here except those allowed by the law; there is no long dress in my jokes.

Ovid has just told the story of how Vulcan came off worse when he laid a trap to catch his adulterous wife Venus with her lover Mars. According to Ovid’s advice, only *uiri* should try to catch their wives: in this, he uses that ambiguous term *uir* which has allowed so much slippage in the elegiac relationship between “husband” and “man”. Are those husbands who catch out their wives, in accordance with the Augustan legislation against *lenocinium*, the only real men? The implication of the Vulcan paradigm, rather, is that they are fools who don’t know the art of love. But Ovid certainly knows the art of ambiguity – and perhaps Augustus does also. As Gibson (1998) has argued, the moral legislation is in fact rather vague about the categories into which it divides the Roman world, despite the importance of those status categories in defining legal and illegal behaviour. That, perhaps, is Augustus’ trap for the unwary.

FURTHER READING

Essential commentaries include J. C. McKeown’s (1987–) multivolume work on the *Amores*, Hollis (1977) on *Ars Amatoria* 1, Gibson (2003) on *Ars Amatoria* 3. The following general books are particularly recommended: Armstrong (2005), Kennedy (1993), Holzberg (2002), Boyd (1997), Gibson, Green and Sharrock (2006).

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CHAPTER 6

Corpus Tibullianum, Book 3

Mathilde Skoie

Umberto Eco's essay "The fragments" (*Frammenti*) takes the form of an imaginary paper presented at the IVth intergalactic congress for archaeological studies in the 121st Mathematical year after a massive nuclear explosion in 1980. In this paper professor Anouk Ooma tries to understand Italy through scraps of survived fragments from a manuscript with the title *Rhythms and Songs of Today* found around Pompeii and collected in what scholars have called the *Quaternulus Pompeianus*. These fragments are read in light of other available texts, mainly a copy of the Encyclopedia Britannica from the 1950s and some other scholarly texts including Frazer, *The Golden Bough*. Based on these, great theories of fertility rites and Italian philosophy are extracted from the fragments. One of the fragments in this collection, in reality a bit of a bawdy Italian song, is read as a sublime poem by the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, and this leads to a sophisticated and philosophical reading of this bit of rather rude and silly Italian folklore to great comic effect.

To any reader of ancient poetry this little parable may act as a humorous reminder of how important the idea of the author, the genre and the context is to our interpretation. However, this perhaps not so fanciful scenario might seem especially pertinent when confronted with book three of the *Corpus Tibullianum*, a book of poems which since the early nineteenth century has been subject of a continuous dispute over dating and authorship. Although the differences in interpretative register have not been quite as extreme as between García Lorca and pornographic pub-songs, the interpretation and evaluation of the poems have changed radically with the idea of the author. Whether the poems written under the name Lygdamus are regarded as written by some unknown minor poet or Quintilian's favourite elegiac poet Tibullus changes the reading completely. Not to mention what happens when the author changes sex,

that is, whether the poems in the voice of Sulpicia are read as the real outcries of a Roman *puella* or a male mimesis of this *puella*.

As there is hardly any external evidence all theories of authorship are based on readings of the texts. Even though some of these have been thoroughly parodied on methodological grounds (Parker 2006), the reading of these poems is extremely interesting precisely from a methodological point of view. Poems from this book have already been used as a model for establishing priority of allusions (Axelson 1960). It is the argument of this essay that the reading of these poems may also serve as enlightening examples of some of the processes involved in our reading of Roman elegy in general. For instance, the consequences of reading poems as a group, a book or individually are huge and much clearer to discern in this corpus than in many of the other elegists, although the issues at stake are the same.

A further consequence of the uncertainties surrounding the poems is that they have only rarely been subject of literary scholarship. Miller (this volume) points out how Tibullus' poetry has often been left on the sideline in discussions of Roman elegy. Book three of the *Corpus Tibullianum* is with few exceptions (Luck 1969 and Holzberg 2001) left out almost completely. However, the poems offer us important insights into the genre of elegy, in particular issues such as originality and conventionality, gender, aesthetic quality and the limits of elegiac discourse. How conventional or original are the elegiac tropes and topoi? What happens when the elegiac ego suddenly is a woman – even a Roman noblewoman? What happens when you change the perspective, e.g., from the first to the third person? These are precisely questions that might be explored through a reading of the third book of the *Corpus Tibullianum*. They are also questions that can be explored without taking an absolute stance on the issue of authorship.

A look at the third book should thus expand our knowledge of elegiac discourse and, as Miller (this volume) argues in the case of Tibullus, “help us dispel the notion that a single normative style of Augustan elegy exists” and that our texts must be read only against this elegiac grammar.

The Corpus and Theories of Authorship

The third book of *the Corpus Tibullianum* consists of twenty poems, one panegyric in hexameters and nineteen elegies of varying length. The first six (3.1–6) deal with the final stages of a romantic relationship with a certain Neaera, called the Lygdamus-elegies because the poet names himself Lygdamus in 3.2.29. Then follows a panegyric to the patron Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus (3.7) in his consulate year, 31 B.C.E. After this follow eleven poems (3.8–18) dealing with the love of a certain Sulpicia and Cerinthus at different stages and from different perspectives. While the first five (3.8–12) of these elegies are around 20 verses each, change speaker, use mythological imagery and seem more elaborately poetic than the following poems, the final six (3.13–18) are much shorter (between four and ten verses), all in the voice of Sulpicia and, at least at first glance, more spontaneous and closer to the epigrammatic form of Catullus. Finally, the book closes with two poems about rumors and unfaithfulness of an unknown beloved (3.19 and 20) of which one presents the elegiac ego as Tibullus (3.19).

In the Renaissance the book was sometimes divided, that is, the third book was reserved for the Lygdamus-elegies (3.1–6) while the others made up a fourth book (4.1–14). This is a division which is still followed in some editions. Although some eighteenth-century scholars had doubts, the poems were, until the nineteenth century, generally regarded as by Tibullus himself. After all, the poems were transmitted with his poetry and Tibullus' name occurs in poem 3.19. Lygdamus (gr. λυγδος [white marble] or λυγδινος [marble – white]) might be the Greek translation of Albius (*albius* = white), Tibullus' family name (*nomen*). Furthermore, Messalla was Tibullus' patron, and some of the poems seem to be elaborations of themes from the first two books. Thus they fit in with the Tibullan context.

As long as the poems were regarded as by Tibullus their quality was not much questioned. When serious doubt was raised both on stylistic and content-based grounds, first about the Lygdamus-poems (Voss 1786) and then about some of the Sulpicia-poems (Gruppe 1838), this not only opened up the range of readings, but allowed readers to even call the poems bad. Letting go of Tibullus as the universal author of the *Corpus Tibullianum* also produced many different theories about authorship. The closest we come to a *communis opinio* today is the model one scholar has called “four poets and a poetess” (Holzberg 1999). According to this model we have six elegies by the pseudonymous Lygdamus (3.1–6), a panegyric by an anonymous author (3.7), five poems by a sympathetic friend of Sulpicia (*Amicus Sulpiciae*) often called “the garland of Sulpicia” (3.8–12), six poems by Sulpicia herself (3.13–18) and two poems by a pseudo-Tibullus (3.19–20). Several authors have been suggested as hiding behind the different poets. Behind Lygdamus, scholars have for instance suggested the eldest son of Messalla, a younger brother of Ovid, the young Ovid himself or the younger brother of Sulpicia (for a list of theories and scholars, see Navarro 1996, 3–20). The Amicus has sometimes continued to be regarded as Tibullus (Gruppe 1838), and sometimes been identified with a young Ovid (e.g., Breguet 1946). However, in most of the more recent followers of the model of five different hands, the authors have remained anonymous, apart from Sulpicia (e.g. Luck 1969, 100–17; Conte 1999, 330–1).

Scholars arguing for an Augustan date of the poems see them as a collection of poems from Messalla's literary circle, a so-called *Hauspoetenbuch*, including the poetry of Messalla's own family, i.e. his niece, *die dichtende nichte*, Sulpicia (Norden 1954, 71). This is a theory which fits well with the placing of the poems in the corpus of Messalla's main protégé, Tibullus. The poems are then perhaps part of the literary activity at his house; according to Catalepton 9 in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, Messalla even wrote poetry himself (Davies 1973, 26). One scholar goes as far as to give Tibullus the role of poetic supervisor for Sulpicia within this circle of friends (Creekmore 1966, 106). He then explains how Sulpicia put away her poems in a memory chest together with those of her supervisor Tibullus only for them to be found and published together long after (Creekmore 1966, 106). However, there are also several scholars who argue that the poems, apart from those attributed to the poetic niece, might rather be of a post-Ovidian, even Flavian date (e.g. Tränkle 1990 and Maltby 2010). Yet, we are still dealing with four poets and a possible poetess.

In recent years, however, at least three new theories have been developed. Holzberg (1999 and 2001, 99–101) suggests that the entire book was written by a single Flavian author responding to Tibullus' works as a kind of poetic joke. The Lygdamus-poems respond to the first six Delia-elegies, in particular the *paupertas* theme. The Sulpicia and

Cerinthus-poems constitute a prequel to Tib. 2.2, where a Cornutus, metrically equivalent with Cerinthus and therefore often read as him, is looking forward to his marriage. The panegyric is, in addition to taking up the reference to Messalla's triumph in 31 B.C.E. mentioned in 1.7, also a kind of variant on the elegiac *recusatio*; through its bad quality it is a subtle way of showing that the elegiac poets really could not write in the *genus grande*. The penultimate poem (3.19), which mentions Tibullus, is according to Holzberg a last clue to the reader, and the final poem (3.20) ending with a "hush" (*tace*) rounds off this clever game.

Hubbard (2004/5) focuses on the Sulpician poems only. He returns to the Augustan age and the idea of the poetry springing out of the Messalla circle. He imagines a context where the two cycles of Sulpicia-poems are presents at the wedding and a following wedding anniversary. Thus also in his theory we end up without a Roman poetess. Hallett (2002a and b) goes in the opposite direction and argues that all of the poems mentioning Sulpicia should be read as by an Augustan Sulpicia herself. She also brings epigraphic evidence into play, the so-called epitaph of Petale (published in *L'Année Epigraphique*, AE 1928.73; more recently published in Stevenson 2005, 43), but this is far from conclusive evidence, as Hallett herself admits (Hallett 2009, 145). We are left with only guesses. One is tempted to agree with Maltby: "In the end absolute certainty in these matters is unobtainable" (Maltby 2010, 339).

Context, Narrative, Aesthetics: 3.20

Given this uncertainty, how may we approach these poems? As mentioned, the different theories carry enormous implications for the interpretations, and not simply for biographical readings. The perhaps most telling example is the reading of poems 3.13–18, those usually attributed to Sulpicia in the almost contemporary works by Ludolph Dissen (1835) and Otto Gruppe (1838). While Dissen, in attributing the poems to Tibullus, focuses on everything that is Tibullan, Gruppe, in attributing them to a real Sulpicia, looks for clumsiness. In the first case we have a rhetorical prosopopoeia, in the second the outpourings of a female heart (Skoie 2002, 162–212). This colors their detailed readings relating to anything from grammar to morality and aesthetic value to such an extent that a person not having the poem at hand might think they were dealing with two completely different groups of poems.

However, this is not just an issue of the 19th century or the idea of the author. A crucial question is linked to the grouping of poems and what constitutes a context. Holzberg (2001) reads the book as a whole and explains the parts accordingly as part of an aesthetic package, the product of one poetic mind responding to the *leerstelle* (blank spots) in Tibullus' work. In a similar vein, but with a focus on book structure, Dettmer offers a reading of the composition of the different groups relating them to a neat symmetrical pattern, a kind of ring composition (1983, 1971–3). Despite having left the biographical school of reading, we find that elegy easily lends itself to narrativising; in fact most elegies in some way contain embedded narratives (Liveley and Salzman-Mitchell 2008 and Liveley this volume). Furthermore, the link between love and narrative, the narrative urge involved in the telling and structuring of love, makes it hard to avoid a narrative reading (Nilsson 2009, 9–15). One effect of this is the plotting or grouping of several poems. As Liveley's article in this

volume shows, the Sulpicia-poems make a good case for tracing elegy's narrative aspects. However, the poems are not simply linked to each other; they are also linked to other poems in the corpus and even to poems outside the corpus. Hubbard (2004/5) uses Tib.2.2 to create a historical occasion for them. Gruppe (1838) and others use the same poem to create a morally acceptable ending. The great Renaissance scholar Joseph Scaliger on the other hand used a poem in the *Appendix Virgiliana*, Catalepton 9, to back up his theory that Messalla was in love with Sulpicia (Scaliger 1577, 153; Skoie 2002, 85–6).

Despite disagreeing on authorship most scholars end up grouping the poems in the same way. However, it is perhaps worth noticing that neither Lygdamus nor Neaera is mentioned in 3.5; in fact Lygdamus is only mentioned in 3.2.29, but all scholars group poems 3.1–6 together. Likewise, 3.18 is as anonymous as 3.20, yet it is almost always read along with the Sulpicia cycle. It is also interesting to notice how much less scholarship there is on the two last poems in the cycle (3.19 and 20), the generally ungrouped ones. In particular, poem 3.20 receives little mention in the scholarly literature. This poem is not simply ungrouped; it is also extremely short, only two couplets:

Rumor ait crebro nostram peccare puellam
 nunc ego me surdis auribus esse uelim.
 crimina non haec sunt nostro sine facta dolore:
 quid miserum torques, rumor acerbe? tace.
 (all passages from Postgate's
 Oxford Classical Text unless otherwise indicated)

Gossip says frequently my girl's unfaithful.
 Just now I wish I had deaf ears.
 The accusation can't be made without my hurt.
 Why rack the lovesick, cruel Gossip? Hush!
 (trans. Lee 1990)

How does one start reading such a poem? One strategy is of course to follow the poet's hush (*tace*) and say very little. Postgate (1910, xlii) simply prints the poem and comments: "It obviously gives no clue as to authorship." The otherwise rather generous commentator Kirby Flower Smith (1913) is almost silent when it comes to this poem (and he leaves out 3.19 completely). After a sentence explaining that "...in this epigram the author would be spared the knowledge of the infidelities of his mistress," he simply gives an ancient and two modern parallels (Smith 1913, 525–6). In the article on the *Corpus Tibullianum* in the *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* poem 3.19 is left out after a brief mention and neither this poem nor poem 3.19 has any place in any of the neat correspondence-models (Dettmer 1983). Another strategy is to attribute this poem as well as poem 3.19 to a specific aesthetic project like pseudo-Tibullus and his joke (Holzberg 1999 and 2001). And yet another way of doing this is of course to attribute poem 3.20 to the author Tibullus himself, perhaps as a young man, so that these poems may be read as part of the development of the poet from neoteric influences towards a fully fledged elegist (Luck 1969, 114–17). In this light the epigrammatic 3.20 with its Catullan length makes sense.

A third strategy is to group poem 3.20 with some of the other poems in a narrative. Here one possibility is to group it with the Sulpicia-poems; we might then achieve a

kind of symmetry of unfaithfulness if we couple it with 3.17, where Sulpicia accuses Cerinthus of being unfaithful as is done in some translations (see Skoie 2008, 247–252). It would also finally give Cerinthus a voice! The focus on rumor might also be picking up the topic of *fama* in poem 3.13 and provide a neat contrast to Sulpicia's wish to pronounce her love. A perhaps rather special variant of the idea of grouping is the theory that these two last poems belong to a group of lost poems. According to this theory, the poems are the remains of the poems written by Tibullus about his first love Glycera, mentioned in Horace 1.33 (Disen 1835, 459–63 and even more extreme Gruppe 1838, 217–231; on Glycera, see Bright 1978, 106). Gruppe, who writes an entire chapter on this lost book of poems to Glycera, calls poems 3.19 and 20 fragments, which in a way makes explicit the lack of obvious context and the urge for a larger framework in which to read them.

The different groupings of poem 3.20 with or without theories of authorship are also neatly tied up with the aesthetic appreciation of the poem. The commentator Christian Gottlob Heyne (1755) found poem 3.20 an epigram of most extraordinary charm and elegance (*miri leporis et urbanitatis epigramma*). He left the question open whether the poem was by Tibullus or not, but many have followed his judgment and based on this attributed it to Tibullus himself. Despite poem 3.19 being the one of the ungrouped poems that mentions Tibullus and the one that is the subject of most serious discussions of the two ungrouped poems (e.g. Postgate 1880; Lee 1963; Wimmel 1968, 257–9), poem 3.20 is the one more frequently attached to the poet, probably precisely because of its poetic quality. Authorship and quality are often mentioned in the same breath, and they seem to support each other. A typical example is Lee (1990, 162) on poems 3.19 and 20: “Next comes an elegy of twenty-four lines supposedly written by Tibullus [3.19], whose name appears in line 13. The poem is not without charm but some rather clumsy reminiscences of Propertius and Ovid make Tibullan authorship unlikely [...] The Book ends with a four-line epigram [3.20] of neat construction and effective point whose author well may be Tibullus.” Of course there also lies a theory of priority of allusion behind this statement, but one does get the sense that quality plays an important part.

Yet, what happens if we try to look at the poem as an independent epigram, a poem in its own right – not a fragment and not related to a specific author or group of poems? We are dealing with a tightly-knit poem; *rumor* is the first word of the first line of the poem and the first word in the last half of the last pentameter. *Rumor* starts as subject and ends as addressee. In the middle a reason is given for this desperate move by the poet: the lover is hurt by the accusations and rather wishes he was deaf or at least that *rumor* would stop pestering him. The poem is often compared to Ovid *Am.* 3.14 (although rarely the other way round) – another way of providing a context for the poem. *Am.* 3.14 also presents a lover with an unfaithful *puella* and though this poet/lover, too, would rather not be in the know, there are significant differences. Ovid is addressing his *puella* and asking her to be discrete, *nec te nostra iubet fieri censura pudicam, / sed tamen ut temptes dissimulare rogat* (“My moral code does not require you to be chaste, / but asks you to try to conceal,” 3–4). Ultimately he even begs her to deny the rumors: just say “I didn’t do it” (*non feci*, 48) and you will win me over (*tibi ... palma est*, 47). Poem 3.20 on the other hand is a matter solely between *rumor* and the poet/lover. The *puella* only plays an indirect part. *Am.* 3.14 gives the reader lots of hints of

what has been going on; poem 3.20 leaves its readers without a clue. There are no hints as to the kind of accusations (*crimina*) or proofs. Rather than suggesting all sorts of ways in which the *puella* might have revealed her unfaithfulness as Ovid does, e.g. lovebites and secret notes, the poet of 3.20 opts for a kind of minimalism. *Rumor* is spreading accusations, and it simply hurts. All the poet/lover wants is for *rumor* to shut up. Even without a canonized author one might be able to state that this poem has a special quality precisely in this emotional efficiency.

Topoi and Tropes: 3.2 and 3.6

Reading poem 3.20 and comparing it to Ovid's *Amores* 3.14 might suggest that we are not only dealing with two poems on the same theme, but dealing with an elegiac topos. Propertius also gives *rumor* a voice, using the same words of introduction, *rumor ait*, in poem 4.4.47, the poem about Tarpeia and her crime. Yet, here *rumor*, although speaking, is given a completely different part to play in the drama. *Rumor* is actually guiding – or misguiding – Tarpeia in her unfaithfulness, not revealing her. The three instances of *rumor* being given a role in Roman elegy are accordingly very different, despite verbal echoes and an issue of unfaithfulness. It is probably hard to talk about a topos at all, yet what these three examples show are the possibilities involved and how including the third book of the *Corpus Tibullianum* enriches our view of the elegiac palette. In this context 3.20 seems rather original in its treatment of the *rumor*-theme. If we move on to the poems usually treated as by the poet Lygdamus, 3.1–6, these are on the contrary thought of as conventional, particularly in their use of elegiac tropes and topoi.

Poems 3.1–6 are all poems about the end of the affair, the *discidium amoris*. If one reads the poems as a sequence there is a development from bad to worse as the poet/lover starts trying to win his beloved back by offering her a present of poems (3.1) and ends simply drowning his sorrows in alcohol (3.6). The poet/lover is all along shackled in the chains of love in the figure of *servitium amoris*. In fact the choice of pseudonym for the poet/lover, a Greek slave-name (used in Prop. 3.6.2 and 4.7.35), might be a rather clever way of signaling the slavery (Navarro 1996, 21). More conventional is perhaps his use of the *paupertas*-theme, “not wealth, but love,” in elegy 3.3. This elegy consists of a series of topoi, such as the uselessness of prayer and the ups and downs of fortune (all listed and dealt with in detail by Navarro 1996, 194ff.), but the dominant topos is the poverty-theme featuring in at least three priamels (Race 1982, 130–31). Although the poem perhaps does not add much to Tibullus 1.1, it shows how the topos might be framed in different ways. In contrast to Tibullus' opening poem, which ends on a boisterous note (*nunc levis est tractanda venus*, “now lighthearted love is our duty,” 73), the tenor of this poem is sad, as Neaera is out of reach and the only prospect is death if the Fates do not allow love to return (35–38).

Death is also the topic of 3.2. Almost the entire poem is a vision of the poet's death. Again the priamel is an important technique (Navarro 1996, 148–9): *the man* who first divided lovers was of iron (the poet here uses the famous Tibullan phrase, *ferreus ille fuit*, 1.10.2) and *the man* who can live on after a break-up is truly tough (1–4), but *I* am not of that kind, *I* am heartbroken and just want to die (5–8). Then follows an almost blissful description of the poet's imaginary funeral (9–30).

ergo cum tenuem fuero mutatus in umbram
 candidaque ossa supra nigra fauilla teget, 10
 ante meum ueniat longos incompta capillos
 et flet ante meum maesta Neaera rogum.
 sed ueniat carae matris comitata dolore:
 maereat haec genero, maereat illa uiro.
 praefatae ante meos manes animamque recentem 15
 perfusaeque pias ante liquore manus,
 pars quae sola mei superabit corporis, ossa
 incinctae nigra candida ueste legent,
 et primum annoso spargent collecta lyaeo,
 mox etiam niueo fundere lacte parent, 20
 post haec carbaseis umorem tollere uelis
 atque in marmorea ponere sicca domo.
 illic quas mittit diues Panchaia merces
 Eoique Arabes, diues et Assyria,
 et nostri memores lacrimae fundantur eodem: 25
 sic ego componi uersus in ossa uelim.
 sed tristem mortis demonstret littera causam
 atque haec in celebri carmina fronte notet:
 LYGDAMVS HIC SITVS EST: DOLOR HVIC ET CVRA NEAERAE,
 CONIVGIS EREPTAE, CAVSA PERIRE FVIT.

Therefore, when I am changed into a feeble ghost
 and black ash covers the white bones over,
 before my pyre in mourning may Neaera come,
 long hair uncombed, and weep before my pyre.
 But may she come companioned with her dear mother's grief,
 one mourning a son-in-law, the other a husband.

After addressing my mortal remains and the newborn soul
 and pouring pure water on devout hands,
 wrapped in black robes they will gather up the only part
 to survive from my body – the white bones,
 and first, when gathered, sprinkle them with old Lyaeon,
 then prepare to pour snow-milk also,
 thereafter with fine linen cloths remove the moisture
 and lay them dry in their house of marble.
 There let the merchandise that rich Panchaia sends
 and Eoan Arabs and rich Assyria,
 and tears in memory of me be poured on the same.
 thus I wish to be laid to rest when turned to bones.

But let the inscription show the sad cause of death
 and mark these verses on the frequented side:
 HERE LYGDAMUS IS LAID. GRIEF AND LOVE FOR NEAERA,
 THE WIFE WHO WAS STOLEN FROM HIM, CAUSED HIS DEATH.
 (transl. Lee 1990)

To imagine one's funeral is a quite common topos in Roman elegy (cf. Tib. 1.1.59–68; Prop. 1.17.19–24, 1.19; 2.8.17–28; 2.13.17–58; see Bürger 1905, 321–4), and is also

referred to in lyric poetry, e.g., Hor. *Odes* 2.20. There is also a possible Hellenistic model in Pseudo-Theocritus 23. Yet, the context, attitude and atmosphere of these imagined funerals of course differ despite stock ingredients such as the funerary rites. Among the parallels listed here Horace is perhaps the most different from Lygdamus since he compares the funeral with the afterlife of the poet. When viewed in light of the poet's afterlife, the funeral loses significance for the poetic ego (Hor. *Odes* 2.20.21–24), unlike in Lygdamus where it plays the major part. A link between the funeral and the poet's reputation is also found in Propertius 2.13, but as in most elegies the fantasy is occasioned by something in the love affair. Or, if not occasioned by the love affair, as in Tibullus 1.3 and Propertius 1.19 where the poets might seem to be facing death, these poems and their funerary fantasies play an important part in expressing the relation to the beloved.

Though the elegiac poets' funerary fantasies are triggered by something in the relationship, their occasions and functions vary widely. While Tibullus' funeral fantasy in 1.1 is the culmination of his happy vision of the relationship between himself and Delia, Propertius in 2.8 fantasizes about his own death and funeral as a continuation of his misery as he is harassed by Cynthia even after death (19–20). In 3.2 Lygdamus positions himself somehow between the two: the occasion for the fantasy is that he is heartbroken, but at the same time the fantasy is idyllic as in Tibullus 1.1. Neaera is finally acting as a beloved should. However, in the epitaph, another topos popular in Augustan poetry (see Navarro 1996, 189), we are reminded of the sad starting point. This couplet (3.2.29–30), though close to standard formulae, manages to echo the vocabulary of lines 1–4 and the miserable state of the heartbroken lover. In fact, the heartbreak is the reason for his death, as the final pentameter makes clear (*coniugis ereptae causa perire fuit*, 30). Furthermore, there is in this also a hint that the poem is to be read as a suicide threat.

Compared to the other elegists, there is a striking difference in the use of terminology for the relationship between the lovers in Lygdamus. Neaera is in the final verse called a wife (*coniunx*) and in verse 14, Neaera is mourning her husband (*vir*) and the mother her son-in-law (*gener*). Are we here dealing with the use of elegiac discourse and elegiac topoi in a marital context, as is done in the later reception of elegy, e.g. in Ausonius' epigram 20 (Sklenár 2005, 53)? There have been different explanations of this marital vocabulary, which also appears in the other elegies. The couple have been regarded as actually married (e.g. Dissen 1835, 323), the conjugal terms have been explained as part of Lygdamus' development of the solemnity of the elegiac *foedus amoris*, or the couple have been regarded as betrothed (this usage is also attested, though the only elegiac example of this is Ovid *Her.* 8.86 [Navarro 1996, 22–4]). Whether Lygdamus is appealing to a real marriage or not, this marital vocabulary is a Lygdamean twist on the elegiac relationship. It also ties in with marital connotations involved in the festival of *matronalia*, a festival for married women, where Sulpicia appears in 3.8.

Woman In Love: 3.13

Though one can argue that Roman elegy is among so many other things playing with gender, the active players are almost exclusively male. Cynthia, Delia, Nemesis, Neaera and Corinna are objects of male desire and male poetry. The male poet/lover might pose as a slave of love in the *servitium amoris*, but he is in control of the discourse. Thus although

these elegiac *puellae* can be both *dominae* and *doctae*, metaphors and muses, they are mainly mute. When Cynthia finally speaks she is either half-asleep (Prop. 1.3) or a ghost (Prop. 4.7), and the matron Cornelia is speaking from the grave (Prop. 4.11). Ovid can offer advice to Perilla as a poet (*Tr.* 3.7), but we do not have her writing – thus even she remains a “written” rather than a writing woman (Wyke 2002, 46–77). On the other hand Ovid’s letter-writing heroines, the *Heroides*, are all in one way or another mythical. Yet, in poems 3.9, 11, 13–18 we finally encounter a female Augustan subject who wants to proclaim her love. She introduces herself in poem 3.16.4 as the daughter of Servius, *Servi filia Sulpicia*. Servius is probably the son of Cicero’s friend Servius Sulpicius who was married to Valeria, Messalla’s sister (Lyne 2007, 344–5). This makes Sulpicia Messalla’s niece which fits nicely with the idea of reading the entire third book as a *Hauspoetenbuch*.

How does the character Sulpicia fit into the elegiac roles of *amator* and *domina*? And how does she conform to or differ from what we might call an elegiac poetics? Poem 3.13 might be read as a statement of Sulpicia’s program:

Tandem uenit amor, qualem texisse pudore
 quam nudasse alicui sit mihi fama magis.
 exorata meis illum Cytherea Camenis
 adtulit in nostrum deposuitque sinum.
 exsoluit promissa Venus: mea gaudia narret,
 dicetur siquis non habuisse sua.
 non ego signatis quicquam mandare tabellis,
 ne legat id nemo quam meus ante, uelim,
 sed peccasse iuvat, uultus componere famae
 taedet: cum digno digna fuisse ferar
 (G. Luck, ed., Teubner, 1998)

At last has come a love which it would disgrace me more
 To hide out of shame than expose to someone.
 Prevailed upon by my Camenae Cytherea
 Delivered him into my arms on trust.
 Venus has kept her promise. My joys can be the talk
 Of all who are said to have noen of their own.
 I would not wish to send a message under seal
 So no one could read it before my man.
 But I’m glad to sin and tired of wearing reputations
 Mask. The world shall know I’ve met my match.
 (transl. Lee 1990)

If read as a programmatic statement, as most scholars choose to do today, this poem is giving a rather mixed message. The content seems clear enough: the poet wants to tell the world about her love. This might even be classified as a bravado statement. Yet, the way she expresses the love is far from open and clearcut, full of hypotaxis and indirect statements (Lowe 1988). Hence she does not say explicitly that she herself would rather tell her love than hide it, but wraps this statement up in a passive construction (*sit mihi fama*, 2). Likewise she does not say that she has been with a man worthy of her; rather she urges it to “be said” (*ferar*, 10). Thus there is a double process of telling and not telling. Likewise, she uses the metaphor of undressing (*nudasse*, 2) and what has been called a “rhetoric of disclosure” (Flaschenriem 1999) while she at the same time verbally

veils herself behind passive constructions. This makes the poem among other things notoriously difficult to translate.

The short answer to the question, how a Roman *puella* speaks of her love, then, might be that she makes a room in the gap between the telling and not telling. Much recent scholarship has explored this room and revealed a sophisticated poetics (e.g. Keith 1997; Flaschenriem 1999; Milnor 2002). A further question is, however, whether this is “a room of her own” or, to stay within the metaphor, it adds further rooms to elegiac poetics in general. In a way it is obvious that she adds rooms to the elegiac apartment, but whether anyone else enters still seems like an open question, though a later tendency has been to treat Sulpicia more as “just another Roman poet” (Merriam 2006). Studies of Sulpicia’s intertextuality and use of topoi have placed her firmly within an elegiac poetic discourse. These readings were made possible by giving up the idea of the poems as simply windows onto a young Roman *puella*’s heart, as was the case in much scholarship between Gruppe’s attribution of the poems to a real woman in 1838 and their reconsideration by Santirocco in 1979. However, Sulpicia’s place in the elegiac discourse is still rather marginal, that is, Sulpicia is read against the foil of her male colleagues, but hardly ever is a male poet compared to her.

Changing Perspective, Changing Role: 3.8, 3.10 and 3.16

While on the surface the other elegists are all subjects and their beloveds objects, Sulpicia is undoubtedly both subject and object, as we have eight poems in the first person (3.9, 11, 13–18) and three in the third person (3.8, 10 and 12). Within the context of elegy in the more narrow sense, this is quite revolutionary. Of course Propertius gives us third person versions of Cornelia (4.11) and Tarpeia (4.5), but within the framework of the poetic exploration of the relationship between a poet and his beloved this is rather unique. Yet, no one would argue that the poems about Sulpicia were not elegiac. After all, the third-person poems are much more conventional than the shorter poems in Sulpicia’s voice (3.13–18).

This use of the double perspective both expands the scope available to the elegiac poet and the list of roles available for the elegiac ego. Indeed Sulpicia seems to be able to play many roles within these eleven elegies. In the first poem dealing with Sulpicia in the book, poem 3.8, Sulpicia might be seen as playing the matron (Milnor 2002, 270) and is furthermore presented as a girl who, like Ovid’s *puellae* in *Am.* 2.4, is pleasing in many forms:

illam, quidquid agit, quoquo uestigia mouit,
componit furtim subsequiturque Decor.
seu soluit crines, fuis decet esse capillis:
seu compsit, compsit est ueneranda comis.
urit, seu Tyria uoluit procedere palla:
urit, seu niuea candida ueste uenit.
talis in aeterno felix Vertumnus Olympo
mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.

10

Whatever she does, wherever she turns her steps,
 unconscious grace serenely attends her.
 If she unbinds her hair, flowing tresses suits her;
 if she sets it, the setting is adorable.
 She burns one if she opts to appear in Tyrian robes;
 she burns one if she arrives dressed in snowy white.
 Just so lucky Vertumnus on everlasting Olympus
 wears a thousand outfits and a thousand suits him.
 (Transl. Lee 1990)

The comparison with Vertumnus, the god of change, draws attention to the way everything suits her, and how the narrator fantasises about her in different attires in a process of “womanufacture” (Sharrock 1991). Here this is made even more explicit by using the term *componere* (8), which is used both about writing and more practical arrangement, thus really making Sulpicia a “written puella.” However, the use of Vertumnus also emphasises the way she goes on to play different roles in the following poems, as both *amatrix* and *amata*. As the first poem about Sulpicia in the collection, this might be an important pointer to the reader. The different versions of dress and dressing/undressing in the corpus (e.g. *texisse*, 3.13.1) might likewise be read not only as metapoetic or rhetorical pointers, but also on a thematic level as a sign of a larger spectrum of roles available to Sulpicia.

A look at the two poems dealing with Sulpicia being ill might highlight some aspects of the relationship between the two perspectives. In 3.17 Sulpicia gives her version:

Estne tibi, Cerinthe, tuae pia cura puellae,
 quod mea nunc uexat corpora fessa calor?
 a ego non aliter tristes euincere morbos
 optarim, quam te si quoque uelle putem.
 at mihi quid prosit morbos euincere, si tu
 nostra potes lento pectore ferre mala? 5

Do you feel real concern, Cerinthus, for your girl,
 now that a fever afflicts my tired body?
 Ah, I would not choose to conquer the wretched illness
 unless I thought that you wished it.
 What should I gain by conquering illness if you
 can bear my suffering with a cold heart?
 (transl. Lee 1990)

In this poem Sulpicia seems to play on illness both as a medical state and as a metaphor for love. In both cases Cerinthus holds the key to her well-being. And the poem becomes a plea for a confirmation of his love. Poem 3.10 is not the response to this plea, but another angle on the situation, what Fredericks (1976, 763) calls an “objective” elegy.

Huc ades et tenerae morbos expelle puellae,
 huc ades, intonsa Phoebe superbe coma;
 crede mihi, propera, nec te iam, Phoebe, pigebit
 formosae medicas applicuisse manus.
 effice ne macies pallentes occupet artus,
 neu notet informis candida membra color,
 et quodcumque mali est et quidquid triste timemus,
 in pelagus rapidis euehat amnis aquis. 5

Come here and cure the sickness of a tender girl,
 come here, Phoebus, proud of your unshorn hair.
 Believe me, hurry, Phoebus and you will not regret
 laying healing hands on this beauty.
 Make sure those pale limbs do not waste away
 and no bad colour marks her fair body.
 And whatever's wrong, whatever trouble frightens us,
 let the river's rushing stream carry out to sea.

In the opening lines of 3.10 we see a third person trying to take action, invoking Apollo. Yet, more interesting compared to 3.17 is the concern for her body. This is of course totally legitimate in relation to the illness that affects her body. In fact in 3.17 she is also as subject worried about her body (*corpora ... fessa*, 2). Although poem 3.10 is more elaborate and descriptive, both objectify the elegiac lover through the use of her body. This might also be seen in poem 3.13 where Sulpicia's use of passive constructions makes herself an object of telling. And even here one might argue that she uses both her body through the suggestion of being naked (*nudasse*, 2) and dressing up in different roles (*texisse*, 1). Again a question might be whether this possibility of being both subject and object might be a peculiar Sulpician position or a more general elegiac possibility. Parallels have been drawn with Ovid's use of his body in the exilic poetry (Milnor 2002, 265–6).

The Third Book of the *Corpus Tibullianum* as Fragments of Elegiac Discourse

To us as twenty first-century readers, the poems of the third book form an important part of the reception of Roman elegy – as part of the physical elegiac corpus, as important contexts for it and as ancient readings of elegy. The above remarks should act as a reminder that these poems exist and pose important questions for our understanding of elegy. Furthermore, I have argued that they make a good showcase for possible reading strategies and their implications when dealing with Roman elegy. In particular, they highlight the reader's quest for a suitable context, whether narrative, historical or aesthetic. As such Gruppe's (1838) designation of poem 3.20 as a fragment seems after all rather apt, though not as a fragment of a lost book to Glycera, but as a fragment of what one might call elegiac discourse. Looked at in this way, the poems are important fragments that give us further clues to understanding elegy. In particular, they may show us that elegy is not such a rigid system after all and make us notice further nuances in the standard elegiac corpus.

FURTHER READING

Unfortunately many of the modern commentaries on Tibullus exclude the third book; we have to go back to Nemethy 1905 for a commentary on the entire corpus. There is, however, one commentary on the whole of book three, a German commentary, Tränkle 1990, which is helpful,

but not particularly interested in literary matters. There are also commentaries on groups of poems: On Lygdamus (3.1–6) there is an excellent commentary by Navarro Antolín 1996, which also gives a good overview of the manuscript transmission of the entire corpus; on Sulpicia (3.13–18), Miller 2002 and Lyne 2007 are recent contributions. Smith 1913 is still a useful option available in most libraries on both Sulpicia (3.13–18) and the garland of Sulpicia (3.8–12).

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PART II

Historical and Material Context

CHAPTER 7

Elegy and the Monuments

Tara S. Welch

Comparing the imaginary world of elegy with that of bucolic, Paul Veyne argues, “The amorous poet is a living species that can be found only in this other world ... elegy seems to take as its theater the streets of Rome, Tivoli, the small port cities of Latium or the Neapolitan coast, but in reality takes place outside this world, just like bucolic poetry” (Veyne 1988, 101). Thus Veyne concludes that elegy is “pastoral in city clothes,” a dress-up metaphor that suggests play, fiction, and the suspension of reality.

Urban outfitted – yes. Fantasy – no. Duncan Kennedy (1993) rebutted Veyne’s view with the argument that elegy’s “costume,” if it is such, is far from a game, but rather is inseparable from Roman realities – and consciously so. It is impossible, says Kennedy, for any game to be completely removed from the cultural, political, ideological, and linguistic contexts in which it is invented and played. When modern children play cowboys and Indians, they reify distinctions between self and other, reenact the hierarchy of individual agency (action) over communal procedure (conversation), and establish a shared history on which rests modern identity.

Likewise Roman elegy is playful, but it is no game. Recent work on elegy’s urbanism confirms Kennedy’s position and shows the various ways the genre depends on, interprets, uses, and discards the city. Indeed so frequent is mention of the monuments, in Propertius and Ovid at least, that one might call Rome the poet’s true beloved, whose affections are also sought by the poet’s supreme rival – the Princeps himself. At no other time in ancient Roman history was the city so lavishly wooed as it was during Augustus’ reign. Not only did the first emperor restore more than eighty shrines and temples that had fallen into disrepair, but he (or his wife or his friends) also built, rebuilt, finished building, or sanctioned the building of the Temple of Palatine Apollo, the Theater of Marcellus, the Forum of Augustus with the Temple of Mars Ultor, the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Porticus Octavia, the Ara Pacis, the Ara Pietatis, the Ara Fortunae Reducis,

an imperial residence on the Palatine, the Temple of the Divine Julius, an addition to the Basilica Aemilia, a Pantheon, a bath complex of Agrippa, two aqueducts (Aqua Virgo, Aqua Iulia), a temple to Jupiter Tonans, the *Saepta Iulia*, the Temple of the Lares, a new Curia, the Chalcidicum, the Temple of Apollo Sosianus, two triumphal arches, the Temple of the Magna Mater, the Temple of Juno Regina, the Horrea Agrippiana, the Temple of Jupiter Libertas, an imperial box at the Circus, the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, the Basilica Iulia, the Horologium Augusti, a Shrine of Youth and one for the Penates, a new Lupercal, and the Aventine Temple of Minerva. This urban activity ranges over the cityscape, from the Campus Martius to the Aventine, up the Capitol and down the Forum. Many of these are listed in Augustus' autobiographical *Res Gestae* (ch.19–21; he omits Agrippa's contributions as builder), which would itself become an Augustan monument when it was displayed on inscribed pillars outside the Mausoleum (*RG* praef.). This inventory – both Augustus' and mine – is meant to be dizzying, and the Princes' boast that he found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble is surely true in spirit if not in fact (Suet., *Aug.* 28.3; Rehak 2006, 3).

The transformation of the city was remarkable, then and now – no surprise that the Augustan era saw the first published architectural treatise of the Roman world. Vitruvius' text at once systematizes contemporary architectural theory, equates architecture with culture, and indirectly lauds Augustus' new city. The architect's approach mirrors the Princes', whose urban activity likewise systematized a chaotic urban fabric and fused cultural *mores*, such as fecundity and reverence for the gods, with built forms (Favro 1996). The new Augustan city was comprised of distinct and comprehensible urban zones – a leisure district in the Campus Martius with baths, porticoes, even a lake; a gentrified “Plebeian Quarter” on the Aventine, with smartly refurbished temples to old-fashioned gods; a symbolic and tour-able “White House” complex on the Palatine with attached public spaces such as temples, libraries, and porticoes that sent a strong message that the Princeps was the locus of Rome's cultural and religious legacy; “Dynastyland,” which used to be the Forum Romanum; and a brand-new civic zone, the Forum Augustum, that surrounded lawmakers and officials with life-sized models of past glory and a huge model of the divine instigator and enabler of Augustus' power, Mars the Avenger.

The changed city reflected the changed political and social reality. “Rome” had always been *urbs Roma*. Camillus argued as much when he persuaded his countrymen not to abandon the burned city after the Gallic sack (Livy 5.51–4). The new Augustan *urbs Roma* bespeaks a new Rome, a fitting capital for the world under its sway and a fitting home for the man under whose sway it now was. The elegists, protesters against traditional forms of power and activists for a different sort of sway, took aim. As might be expected, when Augustan monuments appear in Roman elegiac poems, they are generally not tributes to but rather unwelcome reminders of the Princeps who built them and his power. Broadly speaking, Augustan monuments or other ideologically-charged places in Rome are re-stamped with other meanings preferable to the elegist, or, put differently, they are “read differently” from the way Camillus, or Livy, or Augustus might have read them. Just as the elegist recuperates martial imagery for the lover's pursuits in the trope of *militia amoris*, so too he appropriates the imagery of the city and converts it to his own aims. Like the trope of *militia amoris*, this use of the city is involved and challenging. The metaphor *militia amoris* simultaneously rejects, adapts, even depends on the

violence of warfare to describe and understand love; it is the paradox of *odi et amo* thematized throughout the lover's discourse (Kennedy 1993, 61). The elegist might scorn a monument's patriotic import or its connection to the Princeps ("*odi*") yet he apprehends the opportunities it presents to move about anonymously, to mingle with women, and to flirt. He may even depend on it ("*amo*"). Roman monuments enable the elegist's project in much the same way as Roman peace and prosperity, dependent as they are on violence at the frontier, enable the leisure he needs to live the dissipated life (Keith 2008, 141, Bowditch in this volume). The city is key to his "urban amorous flaccidity" (Miller in this volume).

Elegy's engagement with the monuments is so pervasive as to have warranted two books in the last ten years (Boyle 2003, Welch 2005). Of the extant elegists Ovid is the most urban; as the most prolific voice in the genre he had most opportunity to discuss monuments, but he also grew to maturity when the city was already transforming into the marble capitol, and he lived to witness the grown-up imperial city of the turn of the millennium. We have the gift of reading Ovid's Rome across many elegiac collections (almost sub-genres), across years, and across distance, for his latest poetry was written from exile, when Rome was but his bittersweet memory. Boyle's catalog-*cum*-commentary well illustrates both Ovid's fascination, almost obsession, with the city, and the intricacy of his poetic relationship with it. Less "monumental" is Propertius, whose preferred context is more often generically urban than specifically Roman; what is more, there were fewer new monuments in the twenties, during which he wrote Books 1–3. Nevertheless, Propertius offers more than passing references to monuments, and he devotes his fourth book (dated to 16 BCE) to the celebration of rites, days, and the sacred names of places (*sacra diesque canam et cognomina prisca locorum*, 4.1.69). My own book sought to describe and understand the Umbrian poet's relationship with the city of Rome (Welch 2005). Tibullus' poetry stands more distant from Rome's urban fabric. Whether this emerges from the poet's dreamy or fantastic quality, or from his professed preference for rustic simplicity, identifiable Roman monuments punctuate his elegies rather infrequently. Nevertheless, when they do, they are not asides or throw-away references, but are rather deeply engaged with the poems' logic. The presence of monuments in elegy is too pervasive to offer even a survey of poems, places, or approaches. In what follows therefore I offer instead some poems, some places, and some approaches intertwined. This is, I believe, in keeping with the elegists' own approach, in which the city is rarely a whole (as it is in Propertius 4.1, Tibullus 2.5, or Ovid *Tristia* 3.1 or *Pont.* 1.8) but is rather the sum of its parts, each experienced individually and in discrete contexts.

The License of Restrictive Places: Tibullus and Ovid at the Bona Dea's Sanctuary

At Tibullus 1.6.15–24, the sanctuary of the Bona Dea becomes not a place for serious worship but a pretext for women who prefer their real actions to be unknown by their husbands or partners. The poet-lover speaks (text from Maltby 2002):

At tu, fallacis coniunx incaute puellae,	15
Me quoque servato, peccet ut illa nihil.	
Neu iuvenes celebret multo sermone, caveto,	
Neve cubet laxo pectus aperta sinu,	
Neu te decipiat nutu, digitoque liquorem	
Ne trahat et mensae ducat in orbe notas.	20
Exibit quam saepe, time, seu visere dicet	
Sacra Bonae maribus non adeunda Deae.	
At mihi si credas, illam sequar unus ad aras;	
Tunc mihi non oculis sit timuisse meis.	

But you, gullible husband of a tricky girl, keep an eye on me also; that way she won't stray. Don't let her hang out with young men enjoined in long conversations, take care that she doesn't lie there with her tunic loosened and her breast showing. Don't let her deceive you with a nod, or when she drags her wine-dipped finger across the surface of the table, making signs. Whenever she goes out, beware if she says she wants to see the rites of the Bona Dea, which men may not visit. But if you trust me, I'll follow her alone to the sanctuary. Then I wouldn't have to fear for my own eyes.

Here the poet converts a Roman sacred space into a naughty lover's accomplice. The passage is full of twists and turns that leave the sanctuary bereft of its venerability. The cuckolded husband and his deceitful wife enact a drama of misdirection and misinterpretation that applies to the monument as well. He is *incautus*, gullible – accepting at face value what he is told about her behavior and about the monument (cf. *caveto*, line 17). She is *fallax*, untrustworthy – not only in their marriage, as an adulterer, but in the way she bends and subverts signification: she deceives with a nod and she writes fluid messages – literally – on the table with her wine-dipped finger. The latter image is a compact illustration of the slipperiness of signification, for the liquid *notas* are blurry, easy to erase, circular (leading to nothing), and will soon evaporate to invisibility. Immediately following the elegist mentions the rites of the Bona Dea, but he puts the mention in her mouth as part of an indirect statement, and so the tricky *puella* again misdirects signification, this time of the sanctuary. Is the gerundive *adeunda* her addition, or the lover's who puts these words into her mouth, or the poet's? I read it as hers, an extra warning to her husband not to risk impiety by following her. She has boxed him in; he will either trust her, or become a Clodius – the notorious randy who infiltrated the Bona Dea's nocturnal rites (held at a home rather than the sanctuary but also gender-restricted) in a transgression that blended insurrection, sacrilege, and adultery (Tatum 1999, 85–6). The poor *coniunx* has no choice. His relationship with this monument makes of him either a cuckold or an adulterer.

Our *puella* has boxed in the Bona Dea as well, co-opting for her own purposes the goddess' sacral restriction against male visitors. The word *adeunda* points directly to the Bona Dea's Roman sanctuary at the foot of the Aventine, since this goddess was worshipped by men elsewhere (Brouwer 1989, 254–67). Whereas with the ephemeral table marks and unclear nods the *puella* is able to work slippery communication (and tunics) to her advantage, here she relies, in a sense, on taking the Bona Dea at her word. Men are not allowed, period. She exploits her husband's desire for straightforward communication and uses it against him.

The poet is similarly slippery. He sets himself up as the ally of the *coniunx* by warning him of his wife's subterfuges. The clever husband might wonder how the speaker knows these adulterer's tricks. "Well, keep an eye on me also" the elegist says; "I'm tricky too." Looking at the broader context of this passage within the poem, we see that the poet is in on the *puella*'s secrets – he taught her the tricks and now fears she uses them against him as well. So his advice to the *coniunx* is selfishly motivated, as by this advice he seeks to prevent anyone else becoming part of their amorous circle. He proves this point at the end of our passage, by encouraging the *coniunx* to let him spy on the *puella* at the sanctuary – to protect her from others, certainly, but also to afford him her constant company (Murgatroyd 1991 *ad loc.*). "Visiting the Bona Dea" is thus euphemistic for "sleeping with the *puella*," but it is more than that. By his willing approach to the sanctuary, where no real men may go, the poet exposes the difference of his gender identity from that of the traditional *coniunx* (cf. Gold 1993).

Where is the sanctuary of the Bona Dea in all this? It is 1) an excuse for the *puella* to get away from her husband; 2) exposed as an excuse, a way for the lover to gain the *coniunx*'s trust; 3) the place where the lover might meet the *puella*; or 4) a pretext for the lover to follow the *puella*? Note that it is 5) not a legitimate place for reverent worship. Also notable is how the poet exploits the place's 6) "women-only" status. The *puella* may enter, the *coniunx* may not, the lover will. The elegiac lover is willing to enter women's space to be with his beloved in a way the *coniunx* can't. This monument then also acts as 7) a token of the gender subversion of the elegiac lover. And/or, of course, 8) all of the above.

Because of the imaginative possibilities offered by the sanctuary's secrecy and gendered possibilities, the site was a favorite for the elegists. Propertius lingers on the sanctuary in 4.9, a poem ostensibly about the Ara Maxima. In that poem Bona Dea's sacred space comes off as more like an elegiac bedroom, within which the titillating laughter of girls may be heard yet from which lovers and other men, including Hercules, are put in the part of the *exclusus amator* (Welch 2005, 120–132 and Anderson 1964). This site and its cult, with its gender-exclusivity and its hint of scandal, is one of Ovid's favorites as well. Twice in *Ars* 3 the naughty poet draws attention to it, once as a place for women to fix up their hair (3.243–4), and elsewhere, as in our Tibullan passage, a point of liaison for girls and their lovers (3.637–8). These poems span the years 25 BCE–2CE. Early in this period Livia would restore the Bona Dea's Roman sanctuary, perhaps in an attempt to reverse, or at least curtail, the ideological damage done to it by the elegists, and certainly with the aim of shoring up traditional female morality through participation in sanctioned worship (Welch 2005, 119–120). Livia's intervention wouldn't work, at least in Ovid's mind, for he uncomfortably juxtaposes the Bona Dea's elegiac possibilities with Livia's moralism in a tour-de-force at *Fasti* 5.148–58 (Alton et al. 1978):

... interea Diva canenda Bona est.
est moles nativa, loco res nomina fecit:
appellant Saxum; pars bona montis ea est.
huic Remus institerat frustra, quo tempore fratri
prima Palatinae signa dedistis aves;

templa patres illic oculos exosa viriles
 leniter adclivi constituere iugo.
 dedicat haec veteris Crassorum nominis heres, 155
 virgineo nullum corpore passa virum:
 Livia restituit, ne non imitata maritum
 esset et ex omni parte secuta virum.

In the meantime it's time to sing about the Bona Dea. There is a natural mass, a thing that gives the name to the place. They call it "Saxum;" it is the good part of the mountain. Remus stood on it in vain, when you Palatine birds gave the first sign to his brother. The Patres founded a temple there, hostile to male eyes, on the gently-sloping ridge. An heir of the old family name of Crassus dedicated it, who endured no man with her virgin's body. Livia restored this, lest she fail to imitate her husband and follow her man in every particular.

Like Tibullus, here Ovid multiply undermines the sanctity of the site. After Livia's restoration of it, his treatment flirts with political themes as well. First, the poet links the Aventine location of the Subsaxan shrine to Remus' thwarted augury (*frustra*). Ovid calls it a good part of the hill – but not good enough, since the Palatine birds gave the first signs (*prima signa*) to Romulus. First? Best? Livy says Remus saw his birds first (*priori*, 1.7.1), Livy's Romulus saw more birds (*duplex numerus*), and then the partisans of each argued about the meaning of the augury. Ovid's *prima signa* raises more questions than it answers, drawing attention to the inconclusivity of the original contest and to the usurpation of right by Romulus' might in the ensuing brawl. Where Palatine Romulus is, there too is Augustus, putting inconclusive signs to his own use because he can. Thus, the Aventine-as-Remuria with all its problems is the broader topographical context of the Bona Dea's sanctuary, Livia's restoration, and Ovid's passage. Second, the elegist casts the gender restriction as gender antipathy (*exosa*). Most obviously this refers to the sacral interdiction against men, but the strong word suggests outright gender hostility. Given the "see and be seen" aspect of the city in elegy in general, perhaps this restricted place is one place women can go to escape the objectifying gaze of men.

Thus one alternative perspective on the cityscape (Remus') merges into another (women's). The hostility to men implied in *exosa* pushes Livia's professed and supported female morality down the slippery slope, away from the summit of gender *Concordia* (a temple Livia would also later restore and redefine as a monument to marital harmony) toward the pit of gender enmity. The end of Ovid's presentation further erodes any endorsement of the Livian entry into the Bona Dea's symbolic cachet in Rome. Ovid mentions another of the temple's founders, the Vestal Licinia whose dedication of the shrine was erased when she was later convicted of *incestum* and executed (Cic., *De domo sua* 136; see also Boyle 2003, 237). Livia, mentioned in the final couplet of the passage, would fall prey to the same contradiction, for despite her own probity and her self-portrayal as matron of the ideal family and of all women, her own family was eventually beset with multiple scandals of adultery. Like the specter the poem raises of fratricidal Augustus gazing on the Bona Dea's sanctuary from the Palatine, the appearance of discredited Licinia raises the specter of discredited Livia.

Here we go again: The Circus in Ovid *Amores* 3.2 and *Ars* 1

In Boyle's analytical catalogue of monuments in Ovid, the Circus Maximus appears fifteen times – more than double the number of appearances for any other monument (Boyle 2003, 92–6 and 199–202). *Amores* 3.2 and *Ars* 1.135–63 are both lengthy meditations on this monument, and the latter depends on – even recaps – the former. This fact alone is meaningful; Ovid expects the same readers for both texts and expects those readers to be in Rome and acquainted with the Circus. This monument is one for the masses. It predates Augustus, and he did not restore it, though he did add a *pulvinar* (cushioned chaise) for imperial seating and to act as the endpoint of the *pompa circensis* (the procession of the gods' statues), i.e., to be also the gods' box seats (RG 19, Festus 364M). As Van den Berg says, "Beyond its function as a place for equestrian competition, the *Circus Maximus* offered a singular opportunity for imperial interface with the public. It was also a venue for the imposition and celebration of key social norms within a broad sweep of society. The most disparate elements were present, categorized by rank, age, and gender. They were ordered by location, with special seating for magistrates and religious officials, women, children and their tutors, and married people. Clothing was subject to strict regulation. The Circus was not solely a show of the various competitive events, but the spectators themselves were collectively put on display as a larger reflection of Roman social codes. Individuals took up their place in this venue in a way that mirrored the roles they were expected to perform outside of it. In many regards the Circus was a monumental miniature of Roman society." (2008, 262, see also Henderson 2002, 44–45).

Amores 3.2, the lovers' day at the races, takes all this in its embrace and more. Like Van den Berg in the quotation just given, the poet announces right away that the games *per se* are of little interest to him:

Non ego nobilium sedeo studiosus equorum;
cui tamen ipsa faves, vincat ut ille, precor.
ut loquerer tecum veni, tecumque sederem,
ne tibi non notus, quem facis, esset amor.
tu cursus spectas, ego te; spectemus uterque
quod iuvat, atque oculos pascat uterque suos.

5

I'm not sitting here as a fan of high-bred horses; whichever one you like, I'm praying that one wins. I came to talk to you, to sit with you, so you'll not be ignorant of the love you inspire in me. You go ahead and watch the races; I'll keep my eye on you. Let's each be looking at what we like, and feast our own eyes on it.

Like the Tibullus passage discussed above, Ovid coopts a monument and makes it a venue for a liaison. This one, though, unlike the Bona Dea's sanctuary, is not at all surreptitious. Indeed, whereas loving and liaisons and the Bona Dea's rites are something for restricted eyes (*Tunc mihi non oculis sit timuisse meis*, Tib.1.6.24 and *templa ... oculos exosa viriles*, *Fasti* 5.153), here the visual feast is open to all – her watching the games,

him watching her, us watching them (Boyle 2003, 200), a Foucauldian *panoptikon*, says Henderson (2002, 44–5), likening the sport of watching to the ideological politics of surveillance and social order.

The optical dynamic is the inverse of *Am.* 1.5, a private scene that the poet invites us to witness. In Henderson fashion we might call the voyeurism “ej-oculation,” a word made fitting by what Ovid says next. He envies the jockey. He wishes it were himself. He imagines himself in the saddle with images that metaphorize the horse race and sex (3.2.7–18; text from Showerman and Goold 1977):

O, cuicumque faves, felix agitator equorum!
 ergo illi curae contigit esse tuae?
 hoc mihi contingat, sacro de carcere missis
 insistam forti mente vehendus equis, 10
 et modo lora dabo, modo verberare terga notabo,
 nunc stringam metas interiore rota.
 si mihi currenti fueris conspecta, morabor,
 deque meis manibus lora remissa fluent.
 at quam paene Pelops Pisaea concidit hasta, 15
 dum spectat vultus, Hippodamia, tuos!
 nempe favore suae vicit tamen ille puellae.
 vincamus dominae quisque favore suae!

Oh, lucky driver of horses, whomever you fancy! Why does he get to be your care? I wish it were me, I will press on the horses when they’re released from the sacred starting gate and be carried with a strong will, and now I’ll loosen the reins, now I’ll mark their backs with the lash, now I’ll squeeze the turning post with the inside wheel. If I catch sight of you while I’m in the thick of it, I’ll slow down, and the lax reins will slip from my hands. But how Pelops almost fell by the Pisan spear, while he was gazing at your face, Hippodameia! Of course he won in the end by the girl’s favor. May we each win by the favor of his mistress!

Ovid makes himself a competitive jockey-lover, a role he gives to racing Pelops too (he will do the same to Milanion a little later in the poem). Were you to favor me, he says, we’d run until the reins went slack (cf. 1.5.25, *lassi requievimus ambo*). Ovid’s wishful thinking has elided release (*mora*), Rome (*Roma*), and love (*amor*) in *morabor*. Indeed the poem’s frequent mention of bodies rubbing together keeps the sexual tension high. Throughout are the familiar invitations to furtive touches – the dress trailing in the dirt, an impromptu fan to cool a heaving breast, imaginary dust to be brushed away, dangling toes, mussed hair (lines 26, 38, 42, 63–4, 75–6). The intercourse goes beyond the couple, as the next lines demonstrate (3.2.19–24):

Quid frustra refugis? cogit nos linea iungi.
 haec in lege loci commoda circus habet— 20
 tu tamen a dextra, quicumque es, parce puellae;
 contactu lateris laeditur ista tui.
 tu quoque, qui spectas post nos, tua contrahe crura,
 si pudor est, rigido nec preme terga genu!

Why do you shy away in vain? The line compels us to be joined. The circus offers this convenience in the rule of place. But you there on the right, whoever you are, leave the girl

alone – it pains her when you rub your side against her. And you too, looking over our shoulders, pull your legs up, if you have any decency, and don't press on her back with your stiff knee.

Ovid here comments on the social order encapsulated in the Circus' assigned seating districts. These were more guidelines than rules, and one suspects they were more rigid for the upper classes and those with public authority than for the masses. Men and women might sit together, since the lines that demarcated individual seats also joined them (19–20 and cf. *Tristia* 2.283–4). The clumsy – or perhaps lecherous – neighbors demonstrate on a small scale the fluidity of the social order: in such a crowd, control is impossible. Like the speaker they reenact a race of their own in the stands, with sides rubbing sides and knees pressing backs each with the hope of gaining the finish line. The races, says Ovid in these lines, offer the masses on social display. The masses, says Ovid too, are a race, all jostling and competing and pushing for status.

When the spectacle begins with the *pompa Circensis*, the procession of gods to the *pulvinar*, Ovid again shows his disdain for the religious function of the games over which the gods preside, and instead views the gods as his own toolbox of divine helpers (3.2.43–57).

Sed iam pompa venit — linguis animisque favete!	
tempus adest plausus — aurea pompa venit.	
prima loco fertur passis Victoria pinnis —	45
huc ades et meus hic fac, dea, vincat amor!	
plaudite Neptuno, nimium qui creditis undis!	
nil mihi cum pelago; me mea terra capit.	
plaudite tuo Marti, miles! nos odimus arma;	
pax iuvat et media pace repertus amor.	50
auguribus Phoebus, Phoebe venantibus adsit!	
artifices in te verte, Minerva, manus!	
ruricolae, Cereri teneroque adsurgite Baccho!	
Pollucem pugiles, Castora placet eques!	
nos tibi, blanda Venus, puerisque potentibus arcu	55
plaudimus; inceptis adnue, diva, meis	
daque novae mentem dominae! patiatur amari!	

But now comes the parade – restrain your tongues and spirits! It's time to clap. The golden procession is coming. First comes Victory with her wings out wide – Bring it on, Victory; make my Love the victor. Neptune next – Go ahead and clap, you seafarers. No, I am a landlubber. Clap for Mars, soldiers! I hate war. Peace is my game and love is always found in the middle of peace. Phoebus for augurs, Phoebe for hunters! Minerva, turn craftsmen's hands toward yourself. Farmers, clap for Ceres and get up for slender Bacchus. Castor and Pollux – you're the ones for boxers and riders. Sweet Venus – I'll clap for you, and for your boys who are good with the bow. Bless my undertakings, goddess! Give the will to my new girl! May she permit herself to be loved!

The poet acts as emcee for the procession, directing who in the crowd shall applaud, and when, and to which gods. The division of reverence presents a fragmented view of Roman religion, in which the gods, here marching together to the *pulvinar*, are

nevertheless segregated like the audience in the hippodrome. Ovid claims the first and last gods for himself – Venus and Victory, hendiadys perhaps for Venus Victrix, divine ancestor of the Julian clan. The poet's adaptation of a Vergilian phrase in the penultimate line of this section subverts this goddess as much as does his focus on her sexiness (*blanda*) and her erotic power (the *pueris potentibus* who accompany her). Vergil had twice used the collocation *adnue coeptis*, once at *Georgics* 1.40, in which Vergil asks Caesar, son of Venus, to favor his work, and once at *Aeneid* 9.625, uttered by Ascanius to Jupiter just before he kills Remulus. A prayer by Ascanius killing little Remus, a request to Caesar descendent of Venus, and Ovid asking for a home run tonight – these Ovid equates with his allusion, pulling Vergilian hexameter, Augustan pedigree, and the golden images of the gods themselves down to lover's size. If we recall that these images will end up in the imperial *pulvinar* alongside the emperor, and that the god Ovid prefers is also one of Augustus' favorites, the phrase *inceptis adnue...meis* comments also on the interface of populace and Princeps at this public function. Those who sit in the *pulvinar* have it in their power to grant the poet's wishes, Venereal Augustus/Augustan Venus especially. And, despite the Princeps' fresh attempt via the *leges Iuliae* to regulate morality and prevent just such extramarital intercourse, both social and sexual (Wallace-Hadrill 1985, Cohen 1991, Edwards 1993, 34–62), Ovid's affair is already begun: *inceptis*. His goddess, of course, approved and gave favorable signs (*adnuit et motu signa secunda dedit*, 58). The poet's propensity to subvert the Circus' other signs means Venus had no choice: Ovid could read her nod however he wished.

This last point, Ovid's ability to read the Circus' signs to his liking, suggests another dimension to reading Ovid's monuments: the Circus as a metaphor for reading. The poet picks and chooses whatever meaning he likes, and he draws attention to the entropy of the Circus and its collusion in the violation of boundaries and identities. The denouement of the poem brings this aspect to the finish line. The chariots themselves, after they have run half the race and botched it with a collision (another sign of entropy), return to the starting gate for another go. The race is rerun with a fresh start, the slate of the last race wiped clean. It's a good thing for the lover – the first race wasn't going so well for his girl's favorite. Of course the lover is the poet, so he simply re-scripts the race so that her jockey can win (and so, therefore, can he: 3.2.73–82):

Favimus ignavo — sed enim revocate, Quirites, et date iactatis undique signa togis!	
en, revocant! — ac ne turbet toga mota capillos, in nostros abdas te licet usque sinus.	75
Iamque patent iterum reserato carcere postes; evolat admissis discolor agmen equis.	
nunc saltem supra spatiumque insurge patenti! sint mea, sint dominae fac rata vota meae!	80
Sunt dominae rata vota meae, mea vota supersunt. ille tenet palmam; palma petenda mea est.	

We backed a loser. So, call them back, Citizens! And give the sign with your toga waved all around. Look – they are calling them back! And lest a flying toga mar your hairdo, you may snuggle up close in my cloak. Now the starting gates are open again, the bar is unlocked, and a multicolored mob flies out as the horses are released. Now at least get ahead, and

come forward into the open space! Make my hopes and my mistress' come true! The wishes of my mistress have come true, and my wishes prevail too. Her man has the palm, and now it's time for me to get my palm.

The passage of literal recurrence is replete with the language of cyclicity: *revocate, revocant, iterum, reserato, nunc saltem, sint...sunt...supersunt, palmam...palma*. The same is true more broadly in the Circus, which holds race after race after race, and each race is itself a repeated return to the starting point. The girl is a *nova domina* (3.2.57) and his wooing is a beginning (*inceptis*, 56). Even *refugis* at 3.2.19 suggests repetition – why are you pulling back *again*? Kathleen Shea (2011) connects the new starts in this poem not only with Ovid's revision of the Circus but with his revision of *Amores* from five books into three, as he attests in the epigram that starts the collection. Whether true or not, it is a poetic do-over like the race in 3.2, botched in some way (or presented as botched) and given a fresh start that will presumably, like the fictive race of 3.2, turn out to be favorable to the poet and his (re)readers.

The Circus as a method of reading and rereading and as an endorsement of cyclicity and second tries, comes into clear focus in Ovid's reprise of this poem at *Ars* 1.135–63. The *praeceptor amoris* has read *Amores* 3.2 and uses the lover's techniques as textbook moves: brushing off fictive dust, fanning your girlfriend, guarding against pushy neighbors, lifting her hem out of the dirt and stealing a glance, and copping a feel through the very closeness of the place (1.135–42; text from Mozley and Goold 1985):

Nec te nobilium fugiat certamen equorum;	135
multa capax populi commoda Circus habet.	
Nil opus est digitis, per quos arcana loquaris,	
nec tibi per nutus accipienda nota est:	
proximus a domina, nullo prohibente, sedeto,	
iunge tuum lateri qua potes usque latus;	
et bene, quod cogit, si nolis, linea iungi,	
quod tibi tangenda est lege puella loci ...	

Don't let the contest of noble steeds get away from you; the capacious Circus holds many conveniences. There's no need for fingers, through which you can speak in hidden signals, nor does a message have to be accepted with a nod. Sit right next to your mistress – no one prohibits it. And join your side with hers as far as you are able. No problem: the line forces you to, even if you don't wish it. You have to fondle the girl there – it's the law of the place.

What contact was possible in *Amores* is now demanded in *Ars*. No need even for finger-play: groping (*iunge tuum lateri qua potes usque latus*, 140) is required by law. This is no real law; Circus seats weren't regulated very strictly. Theatrical seats were, however (*leges Iuliae de theatris*), and the *praeceptor* has just described the amorous possibilities of the theater, herding women together for display. Immediately following the entry on the Circus the *praeceptor* applies the lesson "crowd = contact" to the arena, another space whose seating was regulated by Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 44). So much for the imperial attempt to control behavior in public (Henderson 2002, 50–51; Boyle 2003, 201). In terms of the Circus as a model for reading the poetry, the *Ars* turns all the little

loops of the *Amores* poem – the new girlfriend, the attempt, the laps, the start-over – into one big loop: this will be the process each time, every time. Whenever you have a new love, the Circus itself will provide a place of entry (*hos aditus Circusque novo praebebit amori*, 1.163).

The *amator* reads the Circus, the *praeceptor* reads the *amator* reading the circus, and we read the *praeceptor* reading the *amator* reading the Circus. Are we dizzy yet?

Propertius Looking at Palatine Apollo Looking at Propertius

Ovid's monuments are there as a context for lovers to see and be seen (*spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsae*, *Ars* 1.99). As we saw in Tibullus' poem, looking was the equivalent of loving. In Ovid's Circus, looking was loving and everyone looked/loved at everyone looking/loving. Latin elegy is self-conscious about the Janus-like power of the gaze to objectify both the beloved and the gazing subject: *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis* (Propertius 1.1.1). The poets look at, objectify, and interpret monuments – are they not also interpreted by them? In a rich recent study, Lowell Bowditch (2009) examines Propertius 2.31 and 32 as reactions to the “regulatory gaze” of the Princeps that emanates from his monuments. After all, even if the poets direct the conversation about Roman monuments, does not the Princeps set the agenda with his new city (see also Miller 2007, 157)? In what follows I shall explore how elegiac Roman monuments also look at their Roman viewers in these two poems.

Propertius 2.31 and 32 offer a complex interaction between people, monuments, viewing, and judging. In 2.31 the poet excuses his tardiness for a date by explaining that he was at Apollo's new temple, which he describes in detail, focusing on the temple's artistry and art: (text from Barber 1960)

Quaeris, cur veniam tibi tardior? aurea Phoebi porticus a magno Caesare aperta fuit.	
tantam erat in speciem Poenis digesta columnis, inter quas Danai femina turba senis.	
hic equidem Phoebo visus mihi pulchrior ipso marmoreus tacita carmen hiare lyra;	5
atque aram circum steterant armenta Myronis, quattuor artificis, vivida signa, boves.	
tum medium claro surgebat marmore templum, et patria Phoebo carius Ortygia:	10
in quo Solis erat supra fastigia currus; et valvae, Libyci nobile dentis opus;	
altera deiectos Parnasi vertice Gallos, altera maerebat funera Tantalidos.	
deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem Pythius in longa carmina veste sonat.	15

You ask why I come to you a little late? The golden sanctuary of Apollo was opened by great Caesar. It was arranged in remarkable splendor with Punic columns, between which were

statues of the female brood of old Danaus. Here a marble statue seemed to me surely to be more beautiful than Phoebus himself, and gave the impression of performing its verses even though its lyre was silent. And around the altar stood the artist Myron's herd, four fashioned cows, lifelike images. Then the temple soared in the middle out of shining marble, dearer to Phoebus even than his own homeland Ortygia. Atop this temple above the pediment was a chariot of the Sun, and its doors were refined craftsmanship of Libyan ivory. One door lamented the Gauls cast down from the peak of Parnassus, while the other mourned the deaths of the children of Tantalus' daughter. Then inside the Pythian god himself, standing between his mother and sister, wearing his long robe, recites his verses.

He fails to acknowledge the linkage to the Princeps' house or the Actian symbolism of the temple's decoration (Welch 2005, 89–96). All those Apollos bring Augustus to mind, though, especially since one of the statues is said by Servius to have been carved in the Princeps' likeness (*ad Ecl.* 4.10, and cf. Barchiesi 2005, 284). The Danaids are double symbols of the recent civil war, both as treacherous Egyptian women and as part of a fratricidal family. Their exotic *nero* and *rosso antico* materials brand them as dangerously foreign, and the Phoenician columns drive home the point while also boasting the emperor's new control over African quarries. The temple doors indirectly commend Apollo as avenger – of invaded Parnassus, and of his mother's insulted fecundity.

But Propertius does not comment on this nuance. He is drawn by his eye and by the unfolding spectacle before him; his movement through the temple makes dynamic something that is immovable stone (Richardson 1977 *ad loc.*). He draws our attention to the sight of it – *speciem* – and attends to visual details such as the materials, the carving on the doors, the arrangement of elements, and the verisimilitude of the cult statue. Even his word order mimics temple architecture (Welch 2005, 91).

Elegy 2.32 is connected to 2.31 in manuscripts and by many editors who print one poem (Heyworth 2007, Goold 1990, and Richardson 1977 each read one long poem but transpose 7–8 or 7–10 to the poem's beginning to ease the seam). Whether one transposes or not, the immediate reference is gazing at Cynthia; I consider them a dip-tych, and print Barber's 2.32.1–10 for the reader who wishes to explore the options.

Qui videt, is peccat: qui te non viderit ergo,	
non cupiet: facti lumina crimen habent.	
nam quid Praenesti dubias, o Cynthia, sortis,	
quid petis Aeaei moenia Telegoni?	
cur ita te Herculeum deportant esseda Tibur?	5
Appia cur totiens te via Lanuvium?	
hoc utinam spatium loco, quodcumque vacabis,	
Cynthia, sed tibi me credere turba vetat,	
cum videt accensis devotam currere taedis	
in nemus et Triviae lumina ferre deae.	10

He who sees you sins. Who doesn't see you therefore won't desire: the eyes hold the crime of the deed. For why, Cynthia, do you seek the dubious oracles of Praeneste, why the walls of Aeacian Telegonus? Why do chariots take you to Herculean Tibur? Why does the Appian Way take you so often to Lanuvium? I wish you would walk about in this place, whenever you have free time, Cynthia, but the crowd prevents me from trusting you when it sees you rushing as a devotee to the grove, with torches lit, carrying lamps to holy Trivia.

Bowditch notes (2009, 413), “Lines 1–2 serve as a pivot, as it were, for the speaker’s gaze, initially fixed on the temple and its god and then turned in identification with those who would gaze on Cynthia.” However, *te* might also be Apollo, the last referent of 2.31 (Welch 2005, 94 and cf. Callimachus *Hymn* 2.10). Seeing leads to sinning. Lines 7–10 introduce a twist, since those who watch Cynthia bear witness to her actions. She is seen and interpreted by the *turba*. So close on the heels of 2.31 this must evoke the *femina turba* of 2.31.4, the fifty Danaids facing inward in the portico. It is possible their fifty cousins were there also, combining to direct two hundred eyes on the visitor to the temple. Two or three Apollos look on as well, plus Leto and Diana. If we include acroterial Sol in his chariot, Apollo in his all-seeing aspect, we recognize the extent to which we are being watched when we stroll about the imperial complex. Not just the temple, but the rest of the city too watches and judges. At 2.32.17–18 we find that Cynthia’s journey through and out of the city also bears witness to her secret activities:

Falleris, ista tui furtum via monstrat amoris:
Non urbem, demens, lumina nostra fugis!

You are deceived, your path itself reveals your covert passion: irrational, you don’t shun the city, you shun our eyes!

Apparently Cynthia professes that she wants to flee the city, but the poet knows it is really his censorious gaze she wants to escape. Yet there is some truth to Cynthia’s excuse – the city does watch, it does see and does reveal her *furtum*. She is irrational (*demens*) if she ignores this. Yet the poet is willing to forgive the peccadilloes of promiscuity; Apollo himself, still watching from 2.31, will testify that she is guilty of no worse (2.32.27–8):

non tua deprenso damnata est fama veneno:
testis erit puras, Phoebe, videre manus.

Your reputation hasn’t been damaged with the accusation of keeping poison: Phoebus, you’ll be my witness that her hands are pure.

Apollo exonerates her of attempted murder, and this is enough for the poet. The god’s all-seeing judgment trumps that of the human eyes that see, sin, gossip, and judge. The specifically Augustan resonance of Apollo at his temple, especially in light of the attempted moral legislation of 28 BCE (to which the poet reacts in 2.7), leads Propertius in 2.31 and 32 to focus on “the symbolic role of the temple in the newly-established Augustan regime’s attempts to monitor behaviors – both through incipient legislation and a disciplinary, soon to be imperial, gaze...By appropriating the regulation of sexuality for the state, these (marriage and adultery) laws provided the means to manipulate and control, under a perpetual, if symbolic gaze, the actions and everyday lives of the upper classes. And as the Principate gave way to the empire, these laws constituted the legislative equivalent or complement to an urban architecture that reinforced this imperial watchfulness” (Bowditch 2009, 422, 427). Despite Propertius’ refusal to focus on Augustus in this monument, He is there watching.

Conclusion

These examples serve as a taste of the varied, complex, and profound relationship the elegists have with *urbs Roma*. All three examples reveal the extent to which the elegists consider Rome's monuments to be their own to interpret as they like. Leach in this volume, proceeding from Conte and Miller, explains this appropriation as a generic strategy, more precisely as one of the ways elegists engage their readers' complicity in constructing the genre's real-and-imaginary world. The complicity of author and reader, and of real and imaginary, opens real Rome to many fantasies. Near the end of Roman elegy's lifetime, Ovid dares to be explicit about the openness of reading monuments (and texts), and the impossibility of limiting meaning, once a building (or text) is out there. Defending his *Ars* and indicting Roman cities, Ovid concludes with point (*Tr.* 2.301–2):

omnia perversas possunt corrumpere mentes;
stant tamen ipsa suis omnia tuta locis.

Anything can corrupt corrupted minds. But all these things are harmless in and of themselves.

FURTHER READING

Scholarship on elegy and the monuments begins with work on the Augustan city, for which Zanker 1988, Galinsky 1996, Favro 1996 and Rehak 2006 are indispensable. Boyle 2003 and Welch 2005 have devoted monographs to the topic that scrutinize the topographical sensibilities of Ovid and Propertius respectively; Green's 2004 article develops a typology of topographical reference for Ovid's *Fasti*.

Such studies have been the springboard for new approaches that go beyond the monuments as content; Valladares 2005 examines modes of viewing vis-à-vis Roman wall painting and elegy; Bowditch 2009 and Henderson 2002 (characteristically maddening and brilliant) press the politics of the inclusion of monuments in elegies; and Shea 2009 connects monuments with reading on a grander scale.

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CHAPTER 8

Roman Love Elegy and the Eros of Empire

P. Lowell Bowditch

Propertius 4.3 features a dutiful Roman wife, Arethusa, imagining the whereabouts of her husband's campaigns and giving herself lessons in geography, ethnography, and climatology: she learns where the river Araxes flows, how far a Parthian horse can go without water, and which lands freeze with ice and which crumble from the heat and drought (4.3.35–9). Her self-tutorial makes use of a *tabula*, from which she “tries to learn the pictured worlds” (*conor et e tabula pictos ediscere mundos*, 37; Hutchinson 2006). The source and place of the map remain obscure in this elegiac snapshot, but the cartographic imagery underscores a fascination with Rome's imperial reach during the Augustan era – a time when geography increasingly became a political and ideological tool (Nicolet 1991, 9). The first public global map, conceived by Marcus Agrippa and finished by Augustus, was displayed in the *Porticus Vipsania* in the Campus Martius, probably by 2 BCE. At this date the princeps had very likely completed a version of his *Res Gestae*, the narrative account of his achievements, including his military campaigns and conquests over lands he added to the Roman empire.

Roughly contemporaneous with the period recorded in the *Res Gestae*, Latin love elegy incorporates many of the same references to the *orbis terrarum*, the “inhabited world,” some of which Augustus had conquered and some of which he had in fact not. Throughout the canonical elegiac corpus – Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid – one encounters scattered mention of Aquitania (Gaul), Britannia, Hispania, Germania, India, Arabia, the *colorati Seres* (“Chinese”), Greece, the Propontis and the Black Sea region, among others, and, of course, Parthia and Egypt, the lands that in many ways marked the opposite ends of Augustus's imperial achievements: Egypt as the conquest that inaugurated his regime and transformed a civil into a foreign war; Parthia as the elusive land that continued to resist Roman domination. How would a contemporary audience have experienced these often fleeting, at times developed references? For the elite citizen

male – elegy’s notional audience – such geographical names may well have signified as places of past or future military service; for others, perhaps, as tantalizing evocations of an expansive world beyond – sites at the periphery of Rome’s reach, defining its role as metropolitan center; for others still, as rhetorical counterpoint to the narrow confines of elegy’s private – and solipsistic – emotion.

As a genre that evolves almost simultaneously with the Augustan principate, love elegy has a paradoxical relationship with the regime’s public, imperial dimension. Cornelius Gallus, the first Augustan elegist and first prefect of Egypt after it became a Roman province, appears – retrospectively, at least – unusual for writing elegy at the same time that he pursues a political career. We have no way to conclusively judge Gallus’s poetry – for we only have ten lines – but the genre he spawned conventionally displays a first person narrator caught in the travails of passion, often defining himself and his verse in opposition to the public realm. Here, the elegiac poet declines – or declares his inability – to celebrate the military achievements of his patron (or of Augustus) and asserts his commitment to his mistress and to a life devoted to art and love (Prop. 2.1; 2.10; 3.9; cf. Prop. 3.1; 3.3; Ov. *Am.* 1.1 for variations). Nonetheless, images of imperial power appear in such “refusal poems,” for the poetry conjures the public, political dimension of the patron’s life as a way of articulating elegy’s difference. On one level, then, elegy or rather its speakers mobilize a series of binary oppositions between love and war, poetry and politics, elegy and epic, the center at Rome and the periphery of empire. However, just as elegy in fact requires the second term in these pairings as a way of rhetorically defining itself, so does the genre and its celebration of amorous *otium* (“leisure”) depend on the *Pax Augusta* and Rome’s Mediterranean empire as – in Marxist terminology – the conditions of its production (Bowditch 2006, 306–25; Keith 2008, 139–65). Roman domination abroad, following the Punic and Macedonian wars, led to the absorption of Greek and Alexandrian culture – including literary conventions that played a part in elegy’s development. On a material level, elegy’s ambience of luxury and refinement reflects the wealth of foreign goods that streamed into Rome, first as military booty from conquest, and then as commodities in an environment increasingly receptive to trade. The Augustan peace, in turn, led to an increase in *otium*, encouraging elite literary production that included the writing of elegy (Fear 2000, 235).

The spectacle and fact of imperial power permeates the elegiac sensibility in other ways as well. As Gian Biagio Conte has observed, elegy has a tendency to remake the world according to its own coordinates, to perform a kind of “transvaluation of values” where traditional Roman virtues – e.g. *gloria*, *patientia* – become recast in the context of elegiac love (1994, 38). Thus, the masculine ethos of imperial conquest appears in the trope of *militia amoris* (“the soldiery of love”), where the diction and images of militarism serve as the vehicle of metaphors – their figurative component – and private passion is the tenor or “signified” to which they refer (Wyke 2002, 34–35; cf. Kennedy in this volume and 1993, 54–58 on the instability of literal and metaphorical fields): the poet-lover styles himself as a soldier who follows in love’s camp, or the *castra* of his girl, rather than in the military retinue of his patron and commander (e.g. Tib. 1.1.75; Prop. 1.6.30; 2.7.15; Ov. *Am.* 1.9); or as a captive prisoner, neck bowed in submission to his mistress or to Amor himself (e.g. Prop. 1.1.4; 3.11.1–4; Ov. *Am.* 1.2; 2.17.5–6). The same phenomenon applies – in reverse – to the depiction of the patron’s public world. That is, the rhetoric of elegiac gender and erotic desire often shapes the genre’s representation of the

public sphere of empire – elegy’s vision of imperial expansion and all that follows from such conquests: the ritual celebration of triumph, the material goods of military booty and trade, and Augustus’s transformation of the urban environment of Rome itself. This essay examines how elegy incorporates and shapes these varied images and manifestations of imperial power during the Augustan age. Despite the disaffected posture of its male speakers, the elegiac genre in many ways reinforces and legitimizes the cultural identity of its Roman audience as inhabiting the metropolitan center of a far-reaching empire.

Visions of Empire: patrons, travel, and foreign conquest

In the poems of Tibullus, it is the figure of Messalla Corvinus who, as public statesman and Roman general, most evokes the world of imperial conquest. There are no explicit “refusal poems” declining to celebrate his exploits, but Tibullus pointedly contrasts a private, erotic servitude to his patron’s pursuit of military honors: “It becomes you to wage war on land and sea, Messalla, so that your house may display enemy spoils: the chains of a beautiful girl hold me bound [*me retinent vinctum formosae vincla puellae*] and I sit, as slave-guardian before her hard doors” 1.1.53–6). The speaker’s masochistic fantasy draws on imagery appropriate to his patron’s martial sphere, but he prefers a life of rustic poverty with his mistress, Delia (1.1; 1.5), viewing the average soldier’s experience as violent and motivated by greed (1.1.76–7; 1.10).

Despite such preference, one of the most expansive visions of the Roman Empire at the beginning of the Augustan principate appears in Tibullus 1.7. Combining birthday poem, kletic hymn and victory ode, this unusual elegy honors Messalla’s conquest over the Aquitanians and evolves from a brief description of his ritual triumph in 27 BCE into a panoramic sweep of Rome’s imperial reach. Rivers, mountains, and cities metonymically evoke the conquered regions, from Transalpine Gaul’s Pyrenees and personified *Atax* trembling in defeat (*tremet...victus*, 4), to the blue, silent waters of *Cydnus* (13) and ancient Cilicia’s *Taurus* (a summit of 11,000 feet, modern Bulgar Dagh [16]), to Phoenician *Tyros* (20). The poem’s extended hymn-like digression on the Nile and the Egyptian god Osiris (23–48), invited to take part in Messalla’s birthday festivities, displays respect for Rome’s new province – an appeal for tolerance in the aftermath of the civil wars (Konstan 1978, 185). Contrary to his programmatic embrace of the *vita iners* (“the inactive life,” 1.1.5, 58) in the first elegy, the speaker ambiguously claims, “Not without me was your honor acquired,” (*Non sine me est tibi partus honos*, 9), suggesting the poet’s actual participation in Messalla’s expeditions, or, alternatively, the role that elegiac poetry plays in honoring his exploits. The personification of geographic features, particularly rivers, as “witnesses” to his claim (*testis Arar Rhodanusque celer magnusque Garunna,/ Carnutis et flavi caerulea lympa Liger*, 11–12) may even refer to the practice of visually depicting conquered territories in ceremonial floats, suggesting the speaker’s presence at his patron’s triumph. Regardless, the bird’s-eye view of Rome’s provinces and potential holdings enters elegy here, as elsewhere, in relation to the patron and the elegiac poet’s connection to him (cf. Tib. 2.5; Prop. 1.6; 2.10; 3.22; 4.6).

The typical “contrast” between poet-lover and patronal figure does appear in 1.3, where the speaker lies languishing on Phaeacia, imagining both the underworld and a reunion with his mistress Delia, since he is unable to continue with Messalla on his journey to the East. The poet’s sickness – evocative of elegiac *amor* as a condition – disqualifies him from further participation in military pursuits. But the speaker’s prayer to Isis (23–32) and initial recourse to Egyptian religion (often cultivated by the elegiac mistress, cf. Prop. 2.28.61; 2.33; Ov. *Am.* 2.13.7–16) inevitably invoke that imperial world beyond Rome and anticipate the vision of Osiris in 1.7, the birthday-victory poem for Messalla. There, the feminine characterization of the Egyptian god in his festive, ritual guise (43–48) – as a lover of song and dance, with Tyrian clothing and *teneros ... pedes* (“tender feet,” 46) – suggests both the elegiac genre and the gender ambiguity of lover and mistress.

Such coloring of empire’s reach and the political-military sphere through the lens of elegiac coordinates occurs frequently in Propertius’s poems, and particularly those addressed to his patrons, Volcarius Tullus, Maecenas, and implicitly Augustus (1.6; 1.14; 2.1; 2.10; 3.22). Although markedly different from Tibullus 1.7 in tone, Propertius 2.10 presents Augustus’s current or intended geographic conquests in rhetoric suggestive of elegiac sexual relations. Considered a variation on the “refusal poem” or *recusatio*, 2.10 promises to celebrate Augustus’s battles, “since” – or, on closer examination, “when” – the matter of Propertius’s “girl has been written” (*bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est*, 8). After an exaggerated and portentous twelve lines announcing such intentions, only six lines actually focus on the princeps’ putative military accomplishments (2.10.13–18). Given the approximate publication date of Propertius’s second book, 26–25 BCE, the description of geographical territories distorts Augustan imperial exploits. The reference to the Euphrates as denying Parthian military activity (or, alternatively, refusing “to protect Parthian horsemen behind its back,” *Iam negat ... equitem post terga tueri / Parthorum*, 13–14) and regretting the capture of the Crassi (*Crassos se tenuisse dolet*, 14) misrepresents the actual political situation, for the standards seized in 53 BCE from Crassus and his sons were not returned until 20 BCE. Regardless, the two main verbs here – *dolet* and *negat* – appear elsewhere in Propertius in erotic contexts, with *negare* referring to a mistress refusing to bestow her favors (e.g. 2.14.20; 3.21.7) and *dolere* signifying love’s anguish (e.g. 3.8A.10; 3.8A.23). As a result, the lines present the Euphrates as an elegiac beloved denying congress to the Parthians while making its bed accessible to Augustus. In turn, India had certainly not “surrendered” or “given her neck” to Augustus’s triumph (*India quin, Auguste, tuo dat colla triumpho*, 15), despite visits to the princeps from her ambassadors in 25 BCE (Oros. 6.21.19). Nonetheless, here, too, the diction of submission suggests otherwise and evokes the context of elegiac love – the *amator* as enslaved victim (Tib. 1.1.55; 1.2.90; Prop. 1.1.4; 1.13.15; 2.30A.8; 3.15.10; Ov. *Am.* 1.2) or bearing the yoke of animal husbandry (Prop. 2.5.14). In this comic send-up of Augustan imperial ambitions, Propertius recasts the trope of *servitium amoris* (“the slavery of love”) and applies it anew to the military, triumphal context from which it partly derives. Finally, the vision of Arabia trembling before Augustus (*et domus intactae te tremit Arabiae*, 16) likely refers to an expedition undertaken by Aelius Gallus. Motivated by the trade in Eastern spices, gems and perfumes (Gruen 1996, 149), this ill-starred incursion into regions south of Egypt culminated in disaster. In Prop. 2.10, however, military aggression rhetorically conceived as sexual assault governs the

personification of Arabia as a fearful virgin (*intactae ... Arabiae*) and extends into the following lines with reference to Britain: when the speaker counsels Augustus, “if any land withdraws to the edges of the world, soon defeated let it feel your hands [or military might]” (*sentiat illa tuas postmodo capta manus*, 18), the language in fact anticipates threats made to Cynthia in 2.15. There, the speaker assures his mistress that she “will experience his hands, her clothing ripped” (*scissa veste meas experire manus*) if she stubbornly remains dressed (2.15.17–18).

Although love elegy often inverts the gender norms of Roman society, giving the mistress masculine authority over her feminized – or effeminate – lover (Gold 1993, 75–101; Wyke 2002, 33–34; 166–68), the threats of violence posed by the elegist reassert his virility as “epic masculinity.” True, as a displaced assertion of epic militarism that violates elegiac *mollitia* (“softness”), such violence occurs at the semiotic level of generic transgression, suggesting the diminished political space for elite male action under the Augustan principate (Fredrick 1997, 172–193). However, precisely because the epic genre in elegy’s discursive system signifies – in other respects – the normative values of the Roman male as citizen-soldier, such violence also points up the artifice of elegy’s gender inversions: outside of the elegiac world, the Roman male citizen necessarily has more power and political status than the female. As a result, for all that 2.10 mocks Augustus’s unfulfilled imperial plans, the diction of elegiac-epic aggression here aligns the political domination of other lands with the actual Roman gender hierarchy of men over women. In turn, the evocation of gender norms in the context of imperial expansion serves to naturalize Roman hegemonic rule (Bowditch 2003, 163–80). Likewise, in Tibullus 1.7, the “feminine” vision of the Egyptian god Osiris, in his ritual guise, implicitly contrasts with Messalla as conqueror, again reinforcing Roman imperial hegemony as a norm of masculine dominance (Bowditch 2011, 88–121).

A similar dynamic animates the poems addressed to Volcarius Tullus, Propertius’s patron in the *Monobiblos*, who appears subsequently in 3.22 towards the end of the third book. Tullus serves as alter-ego and foil, a symbol of public imperial service against which the poet-lover defines his art and lifestyle. In 1.6, for example, Propertius declines to travel abroad with Tullus, whose sea-faring journey to Eastern Lydia and Ionia and active military service in the retinue of his uncle, proconsul of Asia, constitute an individual trajectory and set of values equivalent to the epic genre. Recalling the homosocial fraternity of Catullus 11, where the poet’s *comites* (“comrades”) are prepared to traverse the globe, the Propertian speaker in 1.6 declares his willingness to “sail the Aegean sea” or “scale Rhipaeian peaks” (2–3) with his friend, were it not for Cynthia’s protestations. The elegiac mistress—both metaphor and metonym for the elegiac genre (Wyke 2002, 11–45; Miller 2004, 64) – keeps the speaker from engaging in such epic travel and exploring the imperial periphery. Despite the contrast between the speaker’s stasis and the patron’s real and imagined travel, the feminine place names of Tullus’s geographic destinations – Ionia and Lydia (1.6.31–32) – suggest both women and elegiac pursuits: Lydia elsewhere serves as a courtesan’s name (Hor. *Od.* 1.25), while Ionia is described as *mollis*, or “soft” and “effeminate,” the common descriptor for elegiac poetry. Propertius again inverts the trope of *militia amoris* into *amor imperii* (“love of empire”), rendering Tullus’s imperial destinations and military life in erotic, elegiac diction (cf. Prop. 3.22.1–6). However, not all elegiac visions of empire explicitly eroticize foreign lands: the culminating lines of Propertius 4.6, arguably the poet’s most imperially “propagandistic” – if

parodic – elegy, feature poets competing at a banquet, at the temple of Palatine Apollo, with encomiastic one-liners on Augustus’s foreign conquests (77–84). The anticipated servitude of the Sygambri (*servire Sycambros*, 77) certainly resonates with the trope of *servitium amoris* but falls far short of the eroticized description found in Propertius 4.3. There, Bactra’s “perfumed leader, his fine linens snatched away” (*raptave odorato carbasa lina duci*, 64) – as Arethusa imagines her campaigning husband’s encounter – recalls the Propertian speaker’s erotic battles with his mistress.

Elegiac Luxury

The characterization of the East in the language of elegiac decadence may justify Roman hegemony in the Mediterranean, but it also suggests the *mollis* (“soft”) genre of elegy, with its effeminate speakers and luxurious ambience, as itself an effect of military conquest. Of course, there can be no clear-cut historical or literary genealogy for elegy, given the complex relationship of literary history to the extraliterary (Miller 2004, 15–30). The poet-lover’s *mollitia* (“softness”) constitutes as much a rhetorical response to the increasing authoritarianism of Augustus and loss of political power for the aristocratic male (Fear 2000, 234–38; Janan 2001, 7–9; Wyke 2002, 176–77) as a convention rooted in late republican discourses about Rome’s encounters with the East. Nonetheless, the depiction of *mollis* Ionia, one of Tullus’s destinations in Propertius 1.6, hints at a discourse of moral censure prominent in Roman historians and orators of the first century B.C.E. Sallust (*Cat.* 11–14), Livy (38.27, 39.6), and Cicero (*Mur.* 11) all attributed the vice of luxury and, implicitly, the chaos of the late republic to corruption “imported” into Rome by soldiers during the period of imperial expansion after the Punic wars. Returning from campaigns abroad generals and soldiers alike brought back vast quantities of military spoil – slaves, artwork, religious artifacts, the sheer bulk of precious metal – as well as, the ancients claimed, an inclination to indulgence. Excessive wealth and the hedonistic propensities of the East had led to a softening of the Roman character. The effeminate *amator* – and the paradoxically censorious attitudes he sporadically adopts – partly evolve from these moralizing discourses of the late republic and the historical conditions of a society enriched by military plunder and seduced by Hellenistic refinement (cf. Griffin 1985, 1–31 on elegiac luxury; Johnson 2009, 4–5 on elegy in response to Rome’s new horizons).

In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust claims that Sulla “had treated the army he led into Asia with luxury and license (*luxuriose nimisque liberaliter*), practices contrary to ancestral custom (*mos maiorum*), in order to secure its loyalty.” As a result, “a pleasurable, lush environment (*loca amoena, voluptaria*) had easily softened (*molliverant*) the fierce spirit of the soldiers in leisure” (*Cat.* 11.5–6). Soon, “the army became accustomed to making love, drinking, and admiring (*mirari*) statues, paintings, and engraved vases.” Propertius’s third poem to Tullus in the *Monobiblos*, 1.14, reveals the young statesman-soldier still in Rome, but as though “proleptically” affected by his journey to *mollis Ionia* and *Lydia* (Keith 2008, 145). Exemplifying Sallust’s vision, Tullus reclines voluptuously by the Tiber (*abiectus Tiberina molliter unda*), drinking imported Lesbian wine from an engraved cup – “the work of Mentor” – and admiring (*mireris*) the scene, as swift skiffs

and slow barges alternately pass by (1–4). Along with the actual luxury products of the East, a highly prized foreign wine and silver drinking ware embossed by a famous Greek artist, Tullus displays behavior imported by Romans returning from military service abroad – namely, the indolent pleasure-seeking customs of the Asian provinces.

Propertius does not explicitly engage a discourse of moral censure in 1.14; rather, he contrasts the actual opulence enjoyed by Tullus with the speaker's erotic bliss, for which imperial luxuries and foreign exotica serve as rhetorical trope (Bowditch 2006, 318). A day of languorous passion with his mistress brings the fabled “waters of Pactolus flowing beneath his roof” and causes “pearls to be gathered from the Red Sea” (1.14.10–12). Despite his dependence on the rhetoric of empire, the speaker disdains Tullus's actual wealth, implying that imported riches neither compensate for, nor protect against, the powerful force of *Amor*. Angry Venus crosses “thresholds of Arabian onyx” (19), mounts “couches spread with crimson” (20) and beds made up with “silks of varied textures” (22) – a precious damask or tapestry likely known to Romans only through the caravan trade (Richardson 1977, 185). Should Venus be graciously pleasant, in turn, the lover “will not fear to scorn the gifts of Alcinous” (24). Suggesting the god-given opulence of Alcinous's palace (Hom. *Od.* 7.81–132), the image looks back to the opening vignette of Tullus's villa, whose landscaped orchards feature trees as thickly planted as on the Caucasus (5–6). Here, too, the goods of a far-reaching empire crowd into the city and Propertius's poem. The reference to the trees of an Asian mountain range suggests the public corollary to Tullus's private urban groves: Pompey the Great's portico-garden, part of a manubial complex (established with war-booty) in honor of Venus Victrix after his conclusive victory over Mithridates of Pontus, featured the Asiatic plane-tree, a favorite of Persian kings for its aesthetic and shade-giving properties, and which the general had originally displayed as foreign spoil in his triumph (Kuttner 1999, 345–47; cf. Prop. 2.32.13).

If the speaker in Propertius 1.14 scorns actual wealth as irrelevant to his erotic life, elsewhere in elegy such riches threaten the lover's amatory relationships (Prop. 2.16; Tib. 1.5.60–68; 2.3; 2.4.21–40; Ov. *Am.* 3.8). The gifts of a moneyed rival, the *dives amator*, often compete with the verse of the poet-lover for access to the elegiac mistress. At one level, both the poet's elegiac verse and the luxury goods demanded by the mistress come from abroad and constitute imports – Roman love elegy as a “domesticated” Alexandrian product displays all the Hellenistic refinement of its “origins”. Nonetheless, the mistress prefers the actual gifts of luxury – from an economic perspective she needs them for her trade as a courtesan (cf. Janan 2001, 85–99; James 2003, 35–68). However, in the eyes of her lover she is greedy, a stock motif of New Comedy. Regardless, when the poet-lover engages in a discourse of moral censure, it appears as a disingenuously high-minded reflex stemming from personal motivation. The dramatic context of elegy's love triangle – the poor speaker, his wealthy competitor, and the elegiac courtesan whose favors they seek – ironically encourages and lends a frame to a censorious diatribe against wealth and its imperial sources.

Tibullus's persona in his second book of elegies adopts such postures, even as he declares his own paradoxical desire to win Nemesis, his new mistress, through gifts of foreign luxuries. Book One's contrast between rustic simplicity and the military life of violence and plunder continues into Book Two but with a new, more complex twist (see Miller in this volume). Deploring Nemesis's sojourn in the country with a rival lover, the

speaker of 2.3 eventually curses agriculture as responsible for his mistress's absence, even as he also condemns the contemporary age's drive for riches: the desire for *praeda* ("spoils," "booty") incites warfare, bringing bloodshed (*cruor*), slaughter (*caedes*) and death (37–38; Maltby 2002); *praeda* encourages dangerous sea-voyages, excessive building practices, and limitless acquisition (39–46). However, the moralist's censure soon capitulates to elegiac refinement, giving way to an implicit elegiac rivalry and erotic competition, where the speaker himself appears to appropriate – wishfully – the elegiac role of *dives amator*: "Alas, I see that girls rejoice in rich men (*divitibus*). Let spoils (*praedae*) come, if Venus desires wealth (*opes*), so that my Nemesis may flow with luxury (*luxuria*) and parade through the city, conspicuous in my gifts (*donis*)" (49–52)." Within fifteen lines *praeda* undergoes a semantic metamorphosis, evolving from connotations of bloody conquest into the more neutral *divitiae* and *opes* ("wealth"), followed by the embodiment of such riches as feminine *luxuria* in the context of elegiac gift-giving – *donis*.

Imperial violence here thus enables the imports that fuel conspicuous consumption, whether in the context of extravagant urban construction or of personal finery. Should the *praedator* desire foreign marble – through the bustling city his column is borne by a thousand strong teams of oxen (43–44). Nor does the speaker's humble wish to use inexpensive pottery from Samos or even "buy local" from Cumae (47–48) have sway with his status-driven mistress. Rather, conquest of foreign countries and markets underwrites the transformation of the Augustan city and caters to Nemesis's penchant for luxury goods displayed against this urban backdrop:

illa gerat vestes tenues quas femina Coa
 texuit, auratas disposuitque vias.
 illi sint comites fuscus quos India torret
 Solis et admotis inficit ignis equis.
 illi selectos certent praebeere colores
 Africa puniceum purpureumque Tyros.
 nota loquor: regnum ipse tenet quem saepe coegit
 barbara gypsatos ferre catasta pedes.
 (2.3.53–60)

Let Nemesis dress in sheer silks, woven and arrayed with golden threads by a woman of Cos.
 May she have dark-skinned companions, those whom India burns and the sun's fire dyes, its
 chariot drawn near. Let Africa with its crimson and Tyre with purple rival to present rare
 colors to her. I speak of familiar topics: he possesses her, his realm, one whose chalked feet
 often walked the slave's platform.

(my translation)

Displaying an uncanny parallel to our own contemporary globalized marketplace, where imported goods reify the often exploited lives of their makers, Tibullus's lines here draw attention to the agent – *femina Coa* – and her craft (*texuit, disposuit*), the human labor behind the exotic Coan cloth so prized by the Roman elite. Such reification of the human lives of the "colonized other" appears as well in the following image of Nemesis's attendants, presumably slaves, who would be conspicuously displayed to mark her wealth. The verb *inficit*, "dyes," suggests the reified or object-status of these companions, as the metaphor looks back to the Coan cloth and forward to Africa and Tyre, competing with

their regionally specific colors. Moreover, the characterization of India as scorching her people and dying them with fire implicitly points to the climatological justification of Rome's political supremacy as occupying a region poised between extremes. Overall, this image of Nemesis, decked in foreign exotica and parading through the streets, reveals the elegiac mistress as a trope for Roman imperialism and economic exploitation. Africa and Tyre present "gifts" as though they were erotic rivals for Rome's attention, even as Nemesis's new lover constitutes a foreign import himself – a former slave according to the jealous disparagement of the speaker. A similar vision of the mistress appears in Propertius 2.16 and 3.13, elegies showing a clear kinship and possible cross-fertilization with Tibullus 2.3 (and 2.4, which also denounces the mistress's greed). In all these poems, the female gender becomes entwined with a discourse of corruption, as "woman's progressively more adorned body symbolizes the progressively more degenerate state" (Wyke 1994, 140). In this discourse, feminine vanity takes the blame for imperial expansion and the ensuing decadence of the body politic.

The elegiac mistress has, in a sense, a paradoxical relationship with the Roman empire. On the one hand, she is characterized as *dura* ("hard" or "cruel"), an epithet extended to her door (e.g. Tib. 1.1.56; 1.8.76; Prop. 1.16.18; Ov. *Am.* 1.6.28), thus connoting her inaccessibility (Prop. 1.16.30; 2.22.43), often on account of the expensive demands she makes on her lovers (Prop. 2.16; 3.13; Ov. *Am.* 3.8). In this her covetousness resembles the soldier's quest for plunder and the *domina's* character – in contrast to the *mol-litia* of her lover – assumes associations of the military life and epic travel. In Propertius 2.16, a *praetor* ("governor") has returned from Illyricum, bringing distress for the speaker but *maxima praeda* ("great spoil") for Cynthia. Decrying Cynthia's infidelity, the poet-lover blames it on *indigna merce* (16), the "shameful ware" that she extracts from the *praetor*, a rich rival who, the text implies, has similarly "fleeced" his province. The rhetoric of profit also appears in 3.4, where the speaker apostrophizes Roman soldiers and holds out the prospect of "great pay" (*Magna, viri, merces*, 3) to be had from Augustus's future campaigns in India. In turn, to the disgust and chagrin of the speaker who is left out in the cold with his verse, Ovid's elegiac *puella* embraces a soldier newly enriched from his military exploits abroad and now in possession of a knighthood (*Am.* 3.8). As in Tibullus and Propertius, foreign *praeda* becomes the courtesan's *merx*, merchandise or "profit," making her a trope for the imperial impulse and aligning her with the soldier she clasps.

On the other hand, it is ironically these very luxury goods from abroad that provide elegy's air of Hellenistic refinement, lending elegance to the mistress and sensuous charm to the *mollis* genre she represents. Criticism has shown the folly of assigning a flesh-and-blood realism to the elegiac beloved, given the numerous ways that the elegists identify their mistresses with the genre and poetics of elegy (cf. Prop. 2.1; 2.24A; Ov. *Am.* 3.1; Wyke 2002, 11–45). In Propertius 1.2 this makes for humorous paradox: the speaker chastises Cynthia for her elaborate hairstyle, seductive Coan silks, and perfume from the Orient, viewing such adornments as superfluous to her natural charms; such claims, however, are disingenuous in a poem that employs *recherché* mythological *exempla* to ornament its thesis (Bowditch 2006, 306). The *peregrina munera* ("foreign gifts," 4) by which Cynthia "sells herself" constitute symbols of elegy's "imported" Alexandrian style even as their very linguistic presence lends an exotic glitter to the text. The jewels and fabrics that the *praetor* brings to Cynthia in 2.16, for example, or those goods that she

demands the speaker himself seek, infuse the poem with color and a sense of spatial expansiveness: clothing from Tyre, dyed a deep purple in the secretions of the shell-fish *murex*; green emeralds or *smaragdi* from Scythia; and *chrysolithi*, tawny yellow peridot or topaz, from India and Ethiopia. Such objects often underscore their foreign provenance with names that belong to an extensive register of Greek loan-words associated with luxury in Propertius (Maltby 1999, 380). As a result, Propertian elegy, more so than Tibullan, transforms and mystifies the processes of Roman imperialism – its military conquest, commercial exploitation, and importation of luxury goods – through the foreign, Greek musicality of its verse (Keith 2008, 156). Indeed, the linguistic fabric of the text appeals aesthetically and sensuously to the reader's pleasure in a way that parallels the mistress's seductive allure for the poet-lover (Bowditch 2006). The Propertian speaker alludes to this metonymic relationship between the "adorned" mistress and the verse she inspires when he asserts that Cynthia's simple movement in sheer Coan silks leads to an entire volume of poems fashioned from such fabric (2.1.5–6) – a statement that suggests a "deluxe" edition of a poetry book (Miller 2004, 142), even as it implicates elegy as a luxury commodity in Roman imperial trade.

Coming after Propertius and Tibullus in the elegiac tradition, Ovid's poems unabashedly celebrate this "global" consumer economy as enabled by foreign conquest. For Ovid, foreign goods serve not merely to adorn but even to replace – literally or metaphorically – the physical attributes of the elegiac mistress. In *Amores* 1.14, for example, after chastising his depilated girlfriend for her use of dangerous hair dyes, the poet-lover points out that the recent triumph over Germany has meant that wigs are easy to come by ("Nunc tibi captivos mittet Germania crines;/tuta triumphatae munere gentis eris," 45–46). Earlier in the poem, he compares his girlfriend's original locks to fine threads of Chinese silk, a luxury good that increasingly made its way to Rome. Ovid's elegiac-didactic poetry, in particular, suggests the favorable conditions to international commerce that came about with the *Pax Augusta*. The *Medicamina Faciei Femineae*, a handbook devoted to cosmetics, openly advertises the advantages of *imperium sine fine* for improving female appearance. As a preamble to his recommendations the speaker draws a series of comparisons to argue the virtues of *cultus*, "cultivation, refinement," as a desirable embellishment on nature's gifts. Just as fleeces are dyed in Tyrian purple and Indian ivory is carved into art, or as marble transforms raw land and gold adorns buildings (7–10), so women should turn themselves out in expensive fabrics, gems from the East, and perfumed hairstyles (18–22), and they should pay particular attention to their faces (52). For a fresh complexion, apply a mixture of Libyan barley (53); iris from Illyria also proves useful as does Attic honey (74, 82) and Libyan salt (94). In addition to the Mediterranean as a market for beauty products, cosmetically-groomed women themselves are compared to luxury items from Tyre or India, pointing up the imported commodity-status of the courtesan as well (cf. Prop. 2.22A; 2.25.43; 2.23.21; Ov. *Ars* 1.56–59; 173–75). Indeed, the analogy between cosmetics and urban transformation (*Medic.* 9–10) signals how Augustus's renovated Rome becomes the hunting grounds for romance in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (see Welch in this volume). As the *praeceptor* advises, spectacles such as the emperor's "mock sea-battle," a re-enactment of the battle of Salamis (*Ars* 1.171–76), or the anticipated military triumph of Gaius Caesar (1.177–228) attract massive crowds – and numerous girls – from all over the empire: Rome has, "you might say, whatever the world has ever had" (*haec habet ut dicas quicquid in orbe fuit*, 1.56).

Elegy and the Roman Triumph

The persistent and evolving motif of the Roman triumph in the development of love elegy charts the fortunes of the ritual institution during the principate and underscores Said's succinct insight that the "enterprise of empire depends upon the *idea of having an empire* ..." (1993, 11). The ultimate honor awarded after a successful military campaign, a general's triumphal procession through the streets of Rome repeatedly affirmed the idea of empire for its citizens. With its opulent parade of riches, captive prisoners, exotic trees and animals, plundered art and geographic placards, the Roman military triumph indeed brought the "world" in the city – *orbis in urbe* (Ars 1.174) – and put it on display. As a public performance the triumph involved spectators as emotional participants invested in its ritual (Brilliant 1999) and reinforced the distinction between imperial Rome and its conquered 'others' (Beard 2007, 107–42). It is this power dynamic of conquest that Roman love elegy often appropriates in its "transvaluation of values" (Conte 1994, 38) making the triumph a powerful metaphor for erotic victory and subjugation. Elegiac lover, his mistress, and Amor himself, all – rhetorically speaking – "wear the purple" in the genre's varied permutations of the trope (Prop. 2.14.23–25; 4.8.17–18; Ov. Am. 1.2; 1.7.35–40; 2.12), with poet, too, playing the *triumphator*, celebrating his achievements in verse (Prop. 3.1.9–12, 19–20; cf. Ov. Am. 1.1.29). However, love elegy also makes many references to the actual ritual of triumphal celebration – both those that historically took place and those anticipated in a panegyric gesture (Tib. 1.7.5–8; 2.1.33; 2.5.115–20; Prop. 2.1.31–34; 3.4; 3.11.53–54; Ov. Ars 1.177–228). As a result, an audience listening to a performance of elegy or reading a collection may well have experienced a degree of slippage between tenor and vehicle: the erotic domain of elegy – the tenor or "signified" of elegy's comparisons in *militia amoris* – rhetorically colors these images of Rome's actual triumphs.

The triumph as metaphor does not appear explicitly in Tibullus. Rather, he incorporates brief descriptions of the event itself into poems set in a ritual or festival context (1.7; 2.1; 2.5). Thus, 2.5 honors Messalla's son, M. Valerius Messalla Messalinus, on the occasion of his induction into the priesthood that oversaw the care and interpretation of the Sibylline books. As a kletic hymn, the poem invites Apollo, "bound with triumphal laurel" (*ipse triumphali devinctus tempora lauro*, 5) to be present at Messalinus's inauguration and to bless and instruct him in the art of prophecy. At the poem's end, the speaker anticipates lauding Messalinus's triumph, when "he himself, wearing laurel, will carry the spoils of war—conquered towns—before his own chariot ..." (115–117). Such confidence in the imperial future follows on the poem's middle section which, with possible allusion to *Aeneid* 1, 6 and 8, narrates the Sibyl's prophecy to Aeneas about the future site of Rome, "whose name is fated to rule lands wherever Ceres beholds her fields from the sky, where dawn becomes visible and where the Ocean's river washes the Sun's panting horses in its flowing streams" (57–60). Despite the absence of any explicitly erotic theme, such imperial prophecy works in conjunction with the poem's triumphal imagery to recall the two preceding poems, 2.3 and 2.4, where goods from the far reaches of empire provide access to Delia in the triangular drama of elegiac love. In essence, Messalinus's future victories will further confirm the Sibyl's imperial vision, continuing to enable the stream of imports that lend Mistress Elegy her allure.

The interpenetration of the domains of *eros* and military *imperium* becomes more pronounced in Propertius's deployment of the triumph motif, particularly in relation to the

victory at Actium. In contrast to Tibullus' oblique allusion in the phrase *novos triumphos* ("fresh triumphs," 1.7.5), referring to Messalla's celebration of his Aquitanian victory following quickly on the heels of Octavian's triple triumph of 29 BCE, Propertius weaves specific details of the unprecedented three day event into his poetry. The programmatic 2.1, a *recusatio* or "generic disavowal" (Davis 1991, 11; 28–30) that includes elements of the repudiated genre, renounces epic subjects but notably catalogues "Caesar's wars" (25) to date: Mutina, Philippi, Naulochus, Perugia, and Actium, a list of the prominent civil conflicts that the poet would celebrate, were it not that – in Ezra Pound's notable imitation – his "ventricles do not palpitate to Caesarial/*ore rotundos*." All the same, after recounting the wounds of Roman national identity (cf. *enumerat miles vulnera*, 2.1.44), the speaker rounds off his inventory by evoking the triumphal display of "Egypt and the Nile, drawn captive through the city; the necks of kings in gilded chains; and the prows of ships that fought at Actium coursing down the *Via Sacra*" (31–34).

Coming after explicit allusions to civil conflict, the inclusion of such triumphal imagery has multiple effects: it underscores the recasting of the civil wars as the victory over a foreign country, it linguistically enacts the visual pomp and seduction of Roman imperial power, and it demonstrates elegy's trope of conquest deployed in a military, rather than erotic, context. Again, readers of elegy are invited to bring their associations of private elegiac *eros* into the public imperial realm: Tibullus's poet-lover, chained before his girl's door (*me retinent vinctum formosae vincla puellae*, 1.1.55), or Propertius's vision of Gallus, languishing, his own neck bound (*vidi ego te toto vinctum languescere collo*, 1.13.15), or the Propertian speaker himself bowed beneath the foot of Amor (*et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus*, 1.1.4); all encourage the reader to perceive Augustan triumph through an erotic lens, aligning sexual and military power, even as the shameful images of manhood underscore triumphal masculinity by contrast (cf. Kennedy 1993, 34–39; Wyke 2002, 177). A similar juxtaposition governs Propertius 3.11, where the speaker appeals to mythological and historical *exempla* of powerful women to rationalize his own enslavement to his mistress (1–2; cf. Prop. 2.16 where the speaker also analogizes his condition to Marc Antony's *infamis amor*, "shameful passion"). The catalogue includes Medea, Penthesilea, Omphale, Semiramis, the legendary ruler of Babylon, and Cleopatra. As myth turns to history, however, the foreign queen's threat to Roman manhood and national identity displays elegy's gender inversion as dangerous in the public, political sphere. The subsequent details of Cleopatra's flight to the streams of the timid Nile and the chains her hands then received (51–52) pointedly cast this Egyptian menace in the captive role. When the speaker then remarks that he saw her wounded "arms bitten by the sacred snakes" (*bracchia ... sacris admorsa colubris*, 53), the allusion to her effigy carried in Octavian's triple triumph recalls the similar image of Cynthia's "injured arms" (*bracchia laesa*, 2.15.20), should she provoke her lover's wrath. The echo of this private, erotic violence in the snake-bite of Cleopatra's arms betrays the artifice of the poem's premise – the elegiac lover's servitude. As a result, masculine dominance in the private domain again aligns with Roman imperial power over her provinces, showing gender as "doing the work of empire" (cf. Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 47 on the visual arts of the Augustan era).

When we turn to Ovid's use of the triumph motif, his elegy typically displays the poet-lover playing multiple roles – prisoner, *triumphator*, and audience to the grand public event. The opening sequence of *Amores* I has the speaker as the victim not of a particular girl but of Cupid himself, who by stealing a foot interferes with the poet's plans to write

epic hexameter (1.1). Complaining that the love god already possesses a “great and excessively powerful domain” (*magna ... nimiumque potentia regna*, 1.1.13), the speaker challenges his “jurisdiction over poetry” as well (*Quis tibi ... dedit hoc in carmina iuris?*, 5). In this witty variation on the Callimachean *recusatio*, Cupid substitutes for Apollo and, by shooting the poet with an arrow, provides him with matter for his elegiac meter. The rhetoric of imperial expansion, with Cupid wounding the poet and extending his sovereignty over verse, thematically anticipates the next poem (Habinek 2002, 47). Here, the love-god “drives the heart he occupies” (*possessa ferus pectora versat Amor*, 1.2.8) until the speaker throws up his hands in surrender – “I am your latest spoil, Cupid” (19)—and becomes a willing victim for the god’s imagined triumph. All love’s enemies – including *Mens Bona* and *Pudicitia* (“Good sense” and “Chastity”) – will follow forlornly as captives in the procession, creating an “absurdist version of republican tradition” (see Leach in this volume). Ovid depicts the scene with elaborate detail – cheering crowd, golden chariot, bound prisoners – all from the first-person perspective of the conquered lover. Despite the elegiac conceit, scholars remark the power of the metaphor and its implications for imperial Rome. Mary Beard reads the poem as the closest expression we have to an account of the victim’s experience, but ultimately views it as a projection of the victor – a “quintessentially Roman fantasy” (2007, 113–14). The next appearance of the triumph in Ovid’s collection, *Amores* 1.7, supports this analysis. Here, the speaker admits and rues a violent attack on his mistress – tearing her hair, cutting her cheeks, acting the brute—and sardonically imagines himself a *triumphator*, driving his mistress as wounded and disheveled captive before him (1.7.35–40). For all that the speaker rhetorically exaggerates as a strategy to trivialize the event, his violence-induced vision of male power correlates with the idea of Roman imperial hegemony – here implicit in the triumphal figure (Greene 1998, 85).

Nonetheless, at one level the scenario of *Am.* 1.7 should not be viewed as belying the elegiac conceit of the lover as passive, feminized victim in 1.2. Rather, as previously remarked, such passivity metaphorically expresses the status of the aristocratic male in the increasingly autocratic environment of the principate. Thus, the poet-lover’s assault on and subsequent fantasy of a “triumph” over his mistress in 1.7 may well articulate, however perversely, the increasingly circumscribed arena for a citizen’s freedom of expression (Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007, 67). How far, then, should one take the analogy between Cupid and his kinsman Augustus at the end of 1.2 (Beard 2007, 113), where the speaker appeals for clemency to the love god on the model of the princeps? Ovid’s witty deflation of Augustan military pomp certainly amuses and should not be read in the outdated terms of “anti-Augustan” sentiment, but his poetry all the same has political implications (cf. Habinek 2002, 46–47). Indeed, after 19 BCE the triumph itself, the consummate form of politico-military “speech” in ancient Rome, became restricted to members of Augustus’s own family. Such restriction was thus in place at the time that Ovid published the first two books of the *Ars Amatoria*, circa 2–1 BCE, containing the panegyric description of the triumph to be celebrated by Gaius Caesar, Augustus’s grandson (and adopted son and heir), for his predicted victory over the Parthians (Ov. *Ars* 1.177–228). The anticipated event never took place, but the lines – with their emphasis on monarchic succession – remained in the *Ars*, with ironic implications given Ovid’s exile in 8 CE. The poet himself notoriously ascribes his banishment to the Black Sea both to a mysterious *error* and to the *Ars* (*Trist.* 2.207), the later censorship of which from

public libraries recalls the opening poems of the *Amores* (published in a 2nd edition around the time of the *Ars*) and the retrospectively ominous query posed to Cupid, “Who gave this jurisdiction over poetry to you, boy?”

The Ovidian *praeceptor* introduces Gaius Caesar’s triumph in the *Ars* as a promising site to find a girl. In Propertius 3.4, a model for Ovid’s passage, the lover similarly observes the ritual from the sidelines, wrapped in his girl’s embrace, a witness to the grand event rather than a participant. Indeed, the erosion of republican *libertas* and the narrowing of venues for political speech and action appear in these triumphal scenes as well, displacing the aristocratic citizen male from the center to the periphery. At another level, the lover who views these triumphal floats, “reading” the placards depicting far-away places, serves as a trope for elegy’s readers. From that same peripheral perspective, filtered through the lover’s gaze – a distorted prism of elegiac conventions – the audience of elegy also beholds the triumph, its opulence, and the countries from which the city’s wealth derives. In this way, elegy invites its audience – whether readers or attendants at a *recitatio* – to contemplate “the idea of empire,” attracting and seducing them through the rhetoric of luxury and reinforcing their sense of Rome as the metropolitan center and Augustus as its unrivalled imperial source.

FURTHER READING

This essay aims to give a general introduction to the relationship between Roman love elegy and the imperial context in which it is embedded. The focus has been on three different spheres of imagery – the evocation of imperial geography; luxury goods; and the military triumph. For an overview of imperial expansion during the Augustan principate, see Gruen (1996); on geography as a political concept in the early empire, see Nicolet (1991); the essays collected in Champion (2004) provide varied perspectives on Roman imperialism. Dalby (2000) offers a comprehensive inventory of the foreign luxuries available as commodities from particular regions, particularly between 50 BCE and 150 CE; “Augustan Poetry and the Life of Luxury,” in Griffin (1985), argues for a close relationship between the leisured environment of the Roman elite and the material ambience of Augustan literature. Beard (2007) is the most recent examination of the Roman triumph and its sources; Galinsky (1969) provides an overview of the triumph motif in elegy. For interpretive approaches to elegy that see it as implicated in Rome’s imperial project, see Habinek (2002); Bowditch (2006); and Keith (2008). The work of Said (1993) is seminal for understanding the relationship between culture and imperialism.

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CHAPTER 9

Rome's Elegiac Cartography: The View from the *Via Sacra*

Eleanor Winsor Leach

In positioning Roman love elegy as the centerpiece of his studies in Latin literary genre, G.B. Conte capitalizes on features that make it at one and the same time both the quintessential embodiment of genre but also unique. Roman literature has nothing else like it – that is to say a repertoire of texts by four poets overlapping in form and in time, treating a common subject matter and yet with pronounced individualities. Quintilian claimed elegy as a nationalistic product in which “we challenge the Greeks” (*Inst* 10.1.93). Without attention to subject matter, he recognizes the four poets’ individualities as stylistic differences, characterizing them from a user’s point of view that pronounces Gallus “hard” (*durus*) and notes that “some prefer Propertius.” Most frequently the common subject matter is taken to be erotic passion, although cases have been made for understanding it as women (Wyke 2002), as the self-representation of the elegist (Miller 2004), or indeed politics (Miller 2004; Janan 2004). All three subjects will figure in this essay, but the common element I shall discuss here is predominantly Rome, the context of representation, as I pose the question: what makes Roman elegy so Roman that it could never have been written in any other context?

On such issues of *Romanitas* and shared subject matter Conte’s criteria for genre and for elegy as a genre can cast some light. He sees the common aspect of all genres as a capacity for transformation; they are “models of realities that mediate the empirical world; a selective representation that makes reality recognizable and meaningfully translates it into something it is not” (Conte 1994, 112). Recognition requires audience, and genres, by Conte’s definition, “are to be conceived not as recipes but as strategies ... inasmuch as they are procedures that imply a response, an addressee as an integral part of their functioning (112).” His formulation engages sender and receiver in cooperative image building (112): “The literary genre’s communicative strategies help the reader to construct a situation or a whole imaginary world.”

From here Conte goes on to position elegy within the total spectrum of genres produced in its time with attention to the processes of selection and restriction by which poets delineate the imaginary worlds within which they invite their readers' collaboration (116). For the pastoralist "bucolic poetry is constructed as a closed and self-sufficient discourse in which every element becomes a 'figure' of the whole pastoral world." Similarly, as Conte has it, "the elegiac poet establishes his identity as a diversity, declares that he is enclosed within one part of the world (within a model of a world) that seems to him self-sufficient." In Conte's chapter the elegiac part of the world is "love" or more precisely "love's suffering" since love without an attendant drama of suffering is not prone to fascinate for very long. But not so fast in circumscribing those boundaries! Just as the world of pastoral, or at least Roman pastoral, requires an external context of urban politics to define it, likewise the poets of the elegiac world would have no basis for displaying their identity as diversity if the obsession that colors their "self-sufficient discourse" did not exist within a context of representation that is the physical world of Rome.

Within the history of literary reception, the singularly delimited field of elegy has prompted readers to construct narratives of poetic production that can be called more reliably true than the internal narratives of biographical experience that readers have periodically imposed upon elegy's individual embodiments. This chronological confinement focuses elegy not merely as a product of Rome but of Augustan Rome, which is the measuring standard of elegiac diversity. Allen Miller asks the question why this particular cultural moment was the only one that could have brought forth elegiac poetry (2004, 1–3). His answer looks toward the profound change in social and ideological structure which, on the one hand, shaped the elegiac position in general, but, on the other, found visible reflection in the self-representations of the individual speakers. From Miller we see that the population of elegy's imaginary world, its mistresses with their vaguely mysterious backgrounds and social identities, their capricious habits and desires are in great part owing to the radical shift in the way that a Roman of equestrian standing born during the Civil Wars and coming to maturity in the aftermath of Actium might define his life and prospects within a society that, in its previous generation, had offered well-defined goals to Cicero's ambition at an equivalent age.

Taking his terms from Lacanian psychology, Miller explains this shift as the occurrence of a rift between the Imaginary and the Symbolic, that is the image of self cherished by self as a face to be turned toward the external gaze, and the codes of value and accessibility comprising the system in which the self must achieve its realization (Miller 2004, 28–29; Janan in this volume). For Cicero, ambitious to obtain influential standing among the well-established Roman aristocracy, any reconciliation of Imaginary and Symbolic confronted obstacles caused by his derivation from a municipal background and non-consular ancestry. All the same Cicero's Roman Symbolic was securely defined as a course of honors to be pursued; his personal Imaginary reached out to it through the employment of eloquence. Only with the beginning of the political seismatism, for which he himself had to bear some responsibility, did his tenure of status become so difficult that his only chances for reconciling the Imaginary with the Symbolic were through the vicarious creation of worlds in philosophical prose. A comparable dilemma faced Caesar in his bid to be rewarded with a second consulship as he claims in faulting the senatorial offense to his *dignitas* that prompted his march from Gaul (*BC* 1. 9.2: "For him [Caesar]

dignitas had always stood foremost and been more compelling than life”). Octavian’s accession made the fault damage permanent, as Miller (2004, 75) observes:

The restoration of the Republic did not mean the return to Roman culture but the gradual and piecemeal evolution of a new Imperial Symbolic that had little place for the previous era’s Imaginary projections of individual *dignitas* and political ambition.

And to put it simply, the elegiac poets compensate by crafting a cursus of erotic politics as a new, adversarial Symbolic code. When Propertius’ Apollo forbids the poet to “thunder out speech in the crazy Forum” (4.1.134: *et vetat insano verba tonare Foro*) his language declares his adversarial posture. With a likely echo of these phrases, Ovid, in vaunting that he has not “prostituted his voice in the thankless Forum” (*Am.* 1.15.6), degrades the career for which his father, like those of Cicero and Horace, had ambitiously destined him. In invoking the Forum as their negative echo chamber, both poets reposition the Imaginary before an altered Symbolic.

But Rome remains permanent, and, building upon Miller, I think that the reason that Roman elegy seems so indissolubly Roman is the ever-presence of the physical city in representing the essentially Roman crises of Imaginary dispossession that the poems dramatize. Rome is what Conte (1994, 110) would call the “locus of cultural images and models, symbolic choices, communicative and perceptive codes.” As Catullus put it in one of his proto-elegies (68. 34–35):

hoc fit quod Roma vivimus; illa domus
illa mihi sedes, illic mea carpitur aetas

And this is so because I live at Rome; there my dwelling
there my establishment; there my life is consumed.

Although what he says in practical terms is that Rome is the location of his library, we readily infer that this *domus* is even more the seat of his imagination and productivity. With Propertius this identification goes even deeper. In a rare moment of amatory triumph, he identifies his presence with Rome (1.8b. 31–32): “and she says that Rome is very dear to her for my sake.” Rome is the place from which he might flee to escape his obsession, but because of this bondage he can leave only at his peril (1.6). But the intrusion of a successful rival ruins his enthusiasm for a young man’s normal diversions (2.16. 33–34):

tot iam abiere dies, cum me nec cura theatri
nec tetigit Campi, nec mea mensa iuvat

Already so many days have gone by when neither the charm of the theater
nor of the Campus touches me, nor does my table please.

Ovid in his cocky didactic persona makes himself master of Rome, so much so that he declares its present temper exactly fitted to his own (*Ars* 3.121–122):

prisca iuvent alios, ego me nunc denique natum
gratulor: haec aetas moribus apta meis

Ancient times may please some persons, but I thank myself for a timely
nativity: this period fits my habits.

and thus the more bitterly his separation from the city in exile strips him of his identity so that he must send his book on a vicarious mission to seek himself out (Huskey 2006).

The remainder of this essay will approach the elegiac poets' images of physical Rome in two senses, first as a topography marked by symbolic places and the activities that distinguish them, and then more abstractly as a spatial extension seen with a vision of both culture and audience. However fictive we may judge the successes and failures of its protagonists to be, the city is no fiction; its images give substance to their self-representations.

Marching along the Via Sacra at the heart of the Forum, the Roman triumph moves toward its conclusion before the Capitoline temple. As prime symbolic marker of Roman aristocratic identity it is an appropriate location from which to begin examining the elegists' response to the rift between the Imaginary and the Symbolic.

There is no doubting the hold of the triumph on Roman imagination or even our imagination of Rome, at least as literature presents it to us. For the populace it is a holiday diversion; for the triumphing commander a generous resource of symbolic capital, adding to family legend as well as to immediate prestige. Accounts of fabulous booty from rich places that surround its historical development make it increasingly representative of Roman imperial possession and render it an often controversial source of influences on the integrity of Roman cultural as well as personal identity. In commenting on these elements, and indeed on the reliability of the inventories of *spolia*, Mary Beard (2007, 173) makes it "a fair guess that by the second century BCE at least, even the most down-beat triumphal ceremony could be reinvented as a block-buster in the fantasies of the victorious general."

Also in their "imaginary worlds" the three elegiac poets – four if we include a Gallus fragment referring to Caesar's victories – reinvent triumphs as one of the most specifically referential features of their Roman topographies. And of course these triumphs, or non-triumphs, are the creations of those who never celebrated them. Not only did they not celebrate them; they lacked either the power base or the ambition to do so. Precisely this non-competitive detachment makes the sights and sounds of triumphal ritual available as a matrix of self-definition in which to act out a variety of roles. Casting himself as spectator the elegist enforces his genre-based rejection of the military life; casting himself as *triumphator* he can celebrate either his amorous conquest or poetic success; as love's captive he becomes living evidence of domination. From Tibullus' fairly traditional portrayal of the actual historical triumph celebrated by Messalla Corvinus, to the real and the projected Augustan triumphs in Propertius, to Ovid's inventions out of whole cloth, each elegist claims his own manner of participation, making his represented occasions into his own form of symbolic capital.

Allowing that elegiac triumphs are a quintessential example of reality reconfigured by representation, these reconfigurations have served as seemingly reliable sources for the apparatus of the ceremony. Beard herself cites their pictures of the *triumphator* in his chariot drawn by white horses, the presence of his captives and the graphics representing the range of Roman conquest. But as Beard in another place observes (2007, 296), the

Augustan Age is the “age of the Triumph...or so it was in all senses but one.” She refers, of course to the devolution of triumphal sanctions into the will of the *princeps* (Suet. *Vita Aug.* 38), and its apparent reservation after 19 BCE as a dynastic prerogative. Here another fissure dividing the Symbolic from the Imaginary may be visible in the changing ways in which the triumph is appropriated. As Rome sees triumphal prerogative slipping from the Republican into the Imperial Symbolic with all its attendant connotations of dominating power, and correspondingly moved beyond reach of those who might have aspired to it, its representational significance becomes liberated, as it were, making its language available for irresponsible application in non-traditional contexts.

To begin looking at this shared feature of the triumph in elegy, we might think its audiences wholly composed of the young. Tibullus blazons the procession of Messalla with the declaration that Roman youths have seen new triumphs. Propertius lackadaisically observes an Augustan procession while standing beside the Via Sacra on the arm of a *puella*. When his poetry wins him a triumph, it is with *Erotes* beside him in the car and a crowd of writers following at his wheels. Ovid, with a possible glance at Vergil’s fateful entry of the Trojan horse, genders the youthful crowd (*Ars* 1.217): *spectabunt laeti iuvenes mixtaeque puellae* (“cheery young men will watch and girls alongside them”) with ambivalent intonations for anyone sensitive to allusion. In *Amores* 1.2.27–28, the Ovidian elegist had imagined a different kind of participation for the collective youth of Rome, bringing them on as Cupid’s prisoners:

ducentur capti iuvenes captaeque puellae:
haec tibi magnificus pompa triumphus erit.
Captured young men will be led and captive girls:
this parade will be your magnificent triumph.

Such youthful audiences should be impressionable audiences, and therefore a good gauge of future promise for Rome.

Announcing Messalla’s triumph as a day decreed by the fates, Tibullus is master of ceremonies throughout poem 1.7. The Roman aristocratic identity of this celebrant makes the scene on the Via Sacra that the poet dramatizes the one among all elegiac triumphs that is orthodoxly Republican at the same time that its evocation of details can be seen to set the poetic agenda for subsequent representations. The procession begins with bound captive chieftains and the general in an ivory chariot drawn by white horses. Next comes a recital of conquered places imagined with a combination of visual and affective details (1.7.9–20). The Rhone current is swift flowing; the Garonne is great; the waters of the Loire, home to a tribe of blond Gauls, are blue. The River Cydnus is blue also and creeps smoothly over shallows with silent ripples and calm waters. The cold, cloud-touching Taurus mountains nourish shaggy Cilicians, and Tyre, credited with entrusting the first ship to the winds, looks upon the sea with lofty towers. These focused vignettes give rise to the suggestion that Tibullus envisions the battle posters known to have figured amid triumphal displays (Konstan 1978, 174–75). His wide-ranging visual geography situates the Via Sacra at the world’s center through the agency of Messalla’s impressive career.

Somewhat surprisingly the elegist claims a share of the honors (1.7.9): *non sine me est tibi partus honos* (“not without me has this honor been brought forth for you”).

Within the context of the entire elegiac book this surprises because the third poem has depicted this seemingly same adherent of Messalla held back by sickness in Phaeacia while his commander took his campaign further east (Johnson 1990, 101–102). The claim to share honors makes most sense if attributed to the speaker's role in recreating, and perhaps even in having arranged, the ceremony. Following the geographical parade, Messalla himself fades temporarily from view beneath a long description of the Nile and Osiris, but returns as the central figure when the poetic impresario turns to his birthday sacrifice and to his civic service as curator of roads responsible for the recent paving of the Via Latina (1.7.57–62). By juxtaposing this benefaction with the triumph, the poem highlights two ways of entering the city: the one brief and ceremonial, the other permanent and quotidian. A farmer who travels the roadway singing Messalla's praises vitally links Tibullus' Rome with the rural hinterland so important to his self-characterization.

At the moment of Messalla's triumph, restriction of the honor had obviously not happened and probably not even been anticipated. Admiring *iuvēnes* might imagine such honor for themselves. Correspondingly, six or seven years later, Tibullus confidently enlists triumphal laurels and popular approbation as an appropriate ornament to the glory of young Messallinus in the poem that celebrates his inauguration as keeper of the Sibylline Books. Family tradition figures here as Messalla applauds the passing chariot of his son (2.5.115–122). But, as Beard observes (2007, 298), this projected triumph never actually came to pass. When Messalla's son did achieve a victory in 12 BCE, he was awarded only triumphal honors. The change had occurred. Premonitions of this change may perhaps be perceived in Propertius whose elegies frequently connect the triumph not only with the life he is not leading but also with the kinds of poems that he does not choose to write. In his second and third books, Propertius manufactures two versions of poetic triumph, the one an actual, or putative, military celebration that he watches as spectator (3.4 and 3.11); the other in which he appropriates the victor's central role for himself (2.14 and 3.1).

The full-scale civic commemoration is tentatively promised in the dedicatory poem to Maecenas (2.1), a so-called *recusatio*, in which the elegist declares his quasi-heroic sources of inspiration in Cynthia's gestures and dress. Should he ever come to epic writing, he proposes to treat Roman subjects – the deeds of Marius against the Cimbri (24), but principally those of “your Caesar” (25–6) giving Maecenas first place as partner in a list of the conflicts that have brought Augustus to power (17–34). The list includes the civil war victories of Mutina, Philippi and Sicily and even, periphrastically, the overturned hearths of Etruria, understood as the Perusine Wars by which Propertius' own family history had been sadly affected (Janan 2004, 50–2; Keith 2008, 1–4). A triumphal procession begins to take shape with mention of Egypt whose captured seven waters of the Nile may indicate pictorial representations as royal necks secured with golden chains and the beaks of Actium ships run along the Via Sacra (30–34). In poem 3.11 this historical procession will recur with even more Egyptian images, including a depiction of the dead Cleopatra with her serpent (3.11.53–54), but before this the elegist's second book introduces another, more personal metaphor of conquest that can surpass a Parthian victory with the *puella* as *spolia*, *reges*, and *currus* (2.14.23–24).

In the introduction of his third book, with its declaration of aesthetic descent from the line of Hellenistic poets, the elegist claims Roman identity with a distinctly



Figure 9.1 Segment of the triumphal procession on the architrave frieze from the Temple of Apollo Sosianus commemorating Augustus' Dalmatian Victory. Collection of the Capitoline Museums, Centro Montemartini. Fototeca Unione, American Academy in Rome. Neg. 5993.

non-Hellenistic triumphal vignette mounting both his Muse and himself in a triumphal car (3.1.9–12):

quo me Fama levat terra sublimis et a me
 Nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis,
 Et mecum in curru parvi vectantur Amores
 scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas.

By which [verses] lofty Fame raises me above earth and the Muse
 born from me triumphs with crowned horses
 and with me in the chariot are riding little Amores
 and a crowd of writers follows at my wheels.

Doubtless the little Erotes owe their presence to the custom of parading the victor's children either in or beside the chariot (Beard 2007, 224–225) while the crowd of admiring or emulative writers substitutes for the soldiers normally marching to celebrate their commander. Anticipating Augustan victories in a program of eastern campaigns reaching in the footsteps of Alexander all the way to the Indies, the elegist imagines the victor in a spoil-laden chariot with horses shying at the applause (3.4). The speaker joins the crowd in company with his *puella* to read the banners with titles showing the captured towns and to view captured leaders seated above their arms. Contemporary Romans could see these very motifs in the triumphal frieze procession of the Temple of Apollo Sosianus (Figure 9.1).

As one who had earlier declined to breed offspring for Parthian triumphs, the elegist shows his detachment with elegant nonchalance: *me sat erit Sacra plaudere posse Via* (3.4.22: “sufficient for me to be able to clap my hands on the Via Sacra”).

Like Propertius, Ovid as elegist dramatizes both actual and invented triumphs, but with the difference that his poems postdate by as much as ten years the last non-dynastic triumph that the Via Sacra witnessed. No longer can the elegist's rejection of this military honor be claimed as a voluntary choice; thus his political manipulation of the ceremony

is bolder. The role that he assumes in the *Amores* inverts those of his predecessors while establishing a subject relationship with their genre. In the metapoetical statement that launches the poems, Cupid cripples the poet's epic aspirations by stealing a foot from his verse (*Am.* 1.1.1–4). Subject must follow form, yet even before he has discovered the love-object requisite to elegy, the onset of passion's symptoms makes him a *praeda* (booty) of Love's conquest (*Am.* 1.2.19–52). Venus hitches her white doves to a chariot made by "step-father Vulcan" – the adulterous innuendo is not to be missed. With its enthusiastic audience swelling, the procession seems to gain momentum as it proceeds. The captive youths and maidens show the elegist as one among many victims subjected to Amor. Supplanting the customary rulers and generals in chains, we see shackled deities who are iconic to Roman moral codes, Mens Bona and Pudicitia, while the licentious figures of Flatteries, Error and Furor are partisans who surpass all other forms of soldiery. Now we see that Amor is riding naked while Venus applauds from Olympus and scatters flowers. The chariot has golden wheels. With these features the triumph changes from a parodic spectacle of substitutions to an outright violation of ceremonial decorum. Rather than riding in aloof aristocratic *dignitas*, Cupid shoots arrows that set on fire the crowd. In this turn Allen Miller sees an inversion of meaning: that the entire show is a dangerous mirror opposite of the Augustan triumph, revealed as a triumph of tyranny when the protector harms his own people (Miller 2004, 166–167). By reminders of kinship with Eros implied by Augustus' vaunted Julian descent from Venus, the elegist wickedly conjoins the Imperial Symbolic with his absurdist version of Republican tradition, but the zest with which he remakes the scenario shows the futility of the old codes.

In the parallel scenario of the *Ars Amatoria* (1.181–210), Cupid's former victim takes up the Tibullan role of impresario to manage a triumph, save that this triumph is merely projected in consequence of some vaguely ambiguous Eastern campaign. If the *laeti iuvenes mixtaeque puellae* (*Ars* 1.217) might just recall Vergil's blindered acclamation of the Trojan horse, this coeducational spectatorship sets up the occasion as an opportunity for seduction ploys. Not only is the crowd youthful, but so also the designated *triumphatores*. As Augustus' adoptive sons (real grandsons), they have already been the recipients of precocious honors; now their technical status as *iuvenes* shows them as evidence for the *princeps*' appropriation of triumphal theater to legitimate his projected dynasty. The onlooking citizen *iuvenes* are side-lined; no riding in triumphal chariots for them. They merely show their manly *virtus* by lordly pronouncements on the geographical images which, as Beard (2007, 183–185) suggests, look suspiciously fabricated. So the mock-triumph that this poem stages might be seen as nothing more than the ruler's dynastic fantasy turned into an occasion to impress a girl.

All these processions demand their readers' imaginative placement in context, for the poets actually provide no explicit tracking of the route covered. Instinctively we present-day readers will probably place their spectatorly vantage point in the Forum, most likely at the point where the Via Sacra begins to climb the Capitoline slope toward its destination. Perhaps we should even imagine that our viewer has climbed to the second story of the Basilica Aemilia for a better view of the posters and floats. But, in turning from the Via Sacra toward the surrounding regions of the city, we must admit that we cannot experience the elegiac poets' Rome with the same familiarly informed manner as did their contemporaries. Occasionally we meet a vignette, one of the clearest and most appealing being the picture of Propertius' aristocratic friend Tullus in his Tiberside villa

watching the traffic of swift sailboats and slow moving barges as he drinks Lesbian wine from a cup of exquisite workmanship (1.14.1–6). This ideal setting for privileged nonchalance is a park-like landscape shaded by a grove as thickly wooded as the Caucasus mountains. Lacking the forested ambience, decorated walls from rooms and corridors of such a Tiberside villa are on view in Rome's Museum of the Palazzo Massimo; they were recovered from the grounds of the Renaissance Villa Farnesina during the late nineteenth-century campaign of building up the Tiber embankments for the sake of flood control.

Of Pompey's theater *porticus* we gain a tantalizing glimpse when Cynthia does – or rather does not – stroll beneath its shady colonnades: (2.32.11–14):

scilicet umbrosis sordet Pompeia columnis
porticus, aulaeis nobilis Attalicis,
et platanis creber pariter surgentibus ordo,
flumina sopito quaeque Marone cadunt.

Perhaps Pompey's colonnade with its shady columns
is tiresome, ennobled by tapestries of Attalid style.
And its design thick with plane trees in parallel rows,
And the streams that flow from drowsy Maron.

Earlier Catullus had imaginatively tracked an elusive friend to this location at a time much closer to its installation (55.6). He seems to be chasing girls (*femellae*). Whether the girls are the many female statues with which Pompey decorated his theater (Pliny *NH* 7.34; 36.104) or real girls the cryptic allusion does not indicate. Real girls are certainly there when Ovid envisions this shaded enclosure as an erotic hunting ground (*Ars* 1.167–68).

Pompey's theater is, of course, Republican. During the years in which Propertius was writing his first three books (which will have been completed before 20 B.C.E. when the Roman standards came back from Parthia), most of the vaunted Augustan monuments comprising the urban conspectus that Welch lists in this volume had still to be built. Only Ovid had the *princeps*' full monumental city to picture or to mock. One Augustan venue that Propertius does share with Ovid is the precinct of the *princeps*' Palatine Apollo temple with its fifty daughters of Danaus standing between columns of golden Numidian marble (Prop. 2.31.3–4; *Am.* 2.2.3–6; *Ars* 1.73–74; see Welch in this volume). Pliny (*NH* 36.24–35) corroborates Propertius' inclusion of a lyre-playing Apollo with his mother and sister as cult images and names their artists. Seen in juxtaposition with the slaughter of Niobe's children carved on one leaf of the ivory doors, this divine triad reverberates ominously. Punishment may also be indicated by the embodiment of the Danaids as an assemblage of black and red marble herm figures standing stiffly between the columns (Figures 9.2 and 9.3).

Manifestly not, as many interpreters have mistakenly assumed, shown in the act of murdering their husbands, they are immobilized in the postures of water carriers (Quenemoen 2006, 241–244).

Given the merely occasional introduction of such glimpses, lacking sense of the spaces between them, we may form a more unified conceptualization of the contemporary city by tracking the lovers' footsteps. Elegiac lovers are always on the move; it is endemic to



Figure 9.2 Feminine Herm in nero antico from the precinct of the Palatine Temple of Apollo. Palatine Antiquarium Inv. 1053. Published by the courtesy of the Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali – Soprintendenza Speciale per I Beni Archaeologici di Roma. Author's Photograph.

their obsessions and lack of satisfaction. The layout of Rome is famously irregular (Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 259–312). The spatial ambience of elegy is a network of streets punctuated by doorways, usually closed. Although Ovid is the most energetic traveler, the less mercurial Tibullan and Propertian lovers are nevertheless given to solitary ramblings. Tibullus goes out at night and anxiously haunts the shadows, trusting Amor to protect him from attacks by nocturnal footpads (1.2.25/25A–28):

en ego cum tenebris tota vagor anxius urbe

 Nec sinīt occurrat quisquam qui corpora ferro
 vulneret aut rapta praemia veste petat.
 Quisquis amore tenetur, eat tutusque sacerque
 qualibet; insidias non timuisse decet.
 See! I wander restless with the shadows throughout all the city.

 Nor does [he] allow anyone to come up who would wound
 bodies with steel or seek booty from a snatched garment
 Whoever is held by love, let him go safe and immune
 any place whatsoever; unsuitable to fear snares.



Figure 9.3 Feminine Herm in nero antico from the precinct of the Palatine Temple of Apollo. Palatine Antiquarium Inv. 1056. Published by the courtesy of the Ministero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali – Soprintendenza per I Beni Archaeologici di Roma. Author's Photograph.

Propertius does more coming and going and goes out more often at night. Despite his obsession with Cynthia he can be a girl chaser. He claims good success at *compita* (street corners) as a “theater” where alluring gestures and words lead him on to his peril (2.22A). This is not the monumental theater of Pompey with its vast seating area and imposing stage front, but something more engagingly intimate. Lovely white arms in motion and various faces reveal that he is talking of the mimic performances of popular neighborhood festivals called *compitalia* in which actresses sing and dance provocatively. Painted vignettes of lewd and nude performances before onlookers in the Columbarium of the Villa Pamphili, a mausoleum for Roman freedpersons, show how risqué these spectacles could be (King 1997, 80–81). In a refractory mood brought on by tracking the capricious itinerary of a *domina*, the elegist states a preference for such women as wear down the Via Sacra with a grubby shoe (*immundo socco*) for they don’t hesitate to come when



Figure 9.4 Pompeian Street and Doorways. Casa del Menandro façade. Vicolo del Menandro Author's Photograph.

called (2.23.15–16). The word *socco* again suggests the extra-societal class of actresses notorious for loose living.

Hardly naive, Cynthia is on to her lover's derelictions, with which she sometimes charges him. Staggering along drunk and without a slave contingent on one nocturnal walk, he finds himself suddenly greeted and taken possession by a troop of little winged Erotes, whom his disgruntled *domina* has dispatched in a posse to capture and bring him in (2.29A). These fellows mean business as they collar the errant lover and prod him to the designated house. They can remind us of the many little winged busybodies in Pompeian painting. Where in all these streets Cynthia may be living is an open-ended question, but returning in 4.7 from burial she claims to have experienced assignations in the Subura frequently descending with a rope from an upper story to make love rather primitively in the streets.

If we want to imagine these streets, Pompeii may give us a model with its lines of continuous house-fronts pierced by doorways, some with more and some less framing of doorposts and entablatures (Figure 9.4).

But Roman elegiac doorways have a frustrating way of being locked and guarded. These doorways are among the more conspicuous images of Rome for would-be lovers whose standardized hardship complaint shows them splayed out on stone thresholds, battered by wind, rain and even ice, laying siege to a *domus* whose interior we don't see

in the conventional vocabulary of atrium and tablinum. What we do see is only the custodian in his cubicle at the entrance corridor with the forbidding male figure, be he husband or rival lover, inside.

In his second poem Tibullus shifts abruptly from the ancestral estate in the country that has been the background ambience of his self-presentational first poem to a decidedly urban world, which we can come to recognize as the actual context for his on-going erotic chagrin. An injunction to pour out more wine as a palliative to recent frustration opens the poem (1.2.1–4):

Adde merum vinoque novos compesce dolores,
 occupet ut fessi lumina victa sopor:
 neu quisquam multo percussum tempora baccho
 excitet, infelix dum requiescit amor.

Pour it unmixed and submerge new sorrows in wine
 So that sleep may seize upon a weary man's conquered eyes
 Nor let anyone rouse up [his] wine soused temples
 while luckless love takes its rest.

Interpretive tradition customarily locates the place from which these words are spoken outside the doorway, but this does not make sense with the opening injunction that requires a place where actually wine is being dispensed. Rather, a Roman audience could readily imagine the speaker reclining with fellows on a banquet or symposium couch. Having just come exhausted from his hours at the doorway, he craves a soporific, but instead of sleeping he tells his story, adding further mystery to the social status of Delia, his innamorata, whom we have already met in poem 1.1. The first part of the monologue dramatizes the vigil itself with alternative address to the stolid doorway and to Delia on ways of deceiving the male (*vir*), which with courage she could easily do. Does her timidity betoken indifference? The poem's conclusion returns to the performance venue as the speaker turns upon the spectator who laughs at him with a reminder that the same fate may happen to anyone, the more ludicrously if in old age.

As Frank Copley long ago demonstrated in his thematic study *Exclusus Amator* (1956), these complaints are variations upon the Hellenistic paraclausithyron, the song at the closed door. Theocritus composed a rural version in which a naive rustic attempts to entice a nymph out of her cavern, but its urban incarnations appear to have been standardized as the wind-up of a drinking party in a torch-light revel that can include a dressing of the door with garlands. Attic vases show such revels, whether they occurred in actuality or in fantasy. Tibullus' appeal to the doorway includes the garlands, as do others, perhaps as testimony to the line of derivation. Drunken lovers break down doors. All three elegists use the motif, but one doubts the frequency of such damage in Augustan Rome. Roman poets do significantly alter the form, partly by isolating the lover at the doorway, partly by ingenious variations of speaker and situation. Including a door poem in Book 1, Propertius presents the scenario through the eyes of the speaking doorway as it bewails the decline from former aristocratic pride that the mistress of the *domus* has brought upon it by her shamefully lascivious conduct (1.16.1–4):

Quae fueram magnis olim patefacta triumphis
 ianua Tarpeiae nota pudicitiae
 cuius inaurati celebrarunt limina currus
 captorum lacrimis umida supplicibus.

I who once was laid open for magnificent triumphs,
 A doorway known to Tarpeia's shamefacedness
 Whose thresholds gilded chariots crowded
 Wet with captives' supplicating tears.

Now disgracefully battered by low-life hands, littered with worn-out garlands and torches, the door must endure the ultimate insult of obscene verse. Pompeian examples let us picture this elite doorway. It is lofty, double-leaved, most likely crowned by a sculpted garland, and gives access to a well-decorated vestibule. The complaint frames a sample *paraclausithyron* as quoted from a generic *exclusus* who is certain that his *inamorata* beds down inside with a rival. Although one may not want to conjecture any literal point of reference for this poem, the scandalous *mores* of a woman descended from a great family or else married into one are scarcely unknown in late Republican literature (Sallust, *Cat.* 25; Cicero, *Cael. passim*).

As we know, the daily cycle of political life brings clients every morning to the doorways of consequential patrons, but dense crowds at the doorway that opens into Propertius poem 2.6 (1–10) are not political but reminiscent of those clustering the doorways of notable Greek courtesans, Corinthian Lais, Menander's Thais, and Phryne whose money restored Thebes. We know not only these doorways, but also the women themselves as products of literary and visual art. The beauty of Phryne, the artists' model, was created by multiple men. Comparison makes the Roman doorway a stage; the elegist a spectator for whom the immediate scenario is also a show of pretending. Even though Cynthia, whose doorway this is, claims that her rituals of greeting and access are those of "kissing kin," the on-looking elegist nourishes an unhappy suspicion that all the cousins are lovers and the figure in a tunic is male – as once happened with the scandal-provoking intrusion of Publius Clodius at the ceremony of the *Bona Dea*.

By virtue of its emphasis on examples and responses, this poem does penetrate the interiors behind doorways with references to immoral paintings (*obscenae tabellae*) by which we presumably understand the mythological paintings of this era. These *turpia visa* ("shameful sights") placed with corruptive intention within once chaste homes have given visual instruction to once innocent girls. Thus from the elegist's exterior spectatorship that breeds fears and suspicions to the naive residents of fashionably-decorated interiors this domestic culture manifests the dangerously transformative influence of reception. Remembering the normal function of the aristocratic house as a space for visitors, we can see its power dynamics reversed here where the woman is the receiver, but even without a guardian can make herself inaccessible because, as the elegists frequently complain, a full purse can open doors.

Conversely, the sanctity of the Roman *domus* appears in the final poem of Propertius Book 4, with a variation upon the lover's exclusion when the deceased matron Cornelia addresses her husband Aemilius Paullus pleading tearfully before her tomb. Although we can easily picture such a tomb in the grand monumental tradition of the aristocracy, this *sepulcrum* serves only as a facade standing before the black doors (*ianua nigra*) of the

underworld that no pleas will unseal (4.11.1–8). Cornelia's eloquence, however, takes us beyond this doorway contrasting the hall of underworld judgment with the chaste interior of her conjugal home.

Unsurprisingly Ovid, whose poems contain many more intimate glimpses into bedrooms and dining rooms than do those of his two predecessors, constructs his version of the paraclausithyron with a parodic perspective that mocks not only the form itself but also the woeful pose of the lover that it displays. Addressing, for variety, the doorkeeper rather than the door, he pleads that amatory sufferings have so reduced his physical frame that he needs only a very thin crack to enter the *domus* (*Am.* 1.6.3–6). Doorways figure significantly in the ninth poem, *militat omnis amans* ("every lover goes soldiering") which exploits the potential of metaphor and metonymy by a point-for-point series of cleverly outrageous likenesses between the good soldier and the energetic lover. Both endure frigid nights and freezing showers. Both watch and lay siege (*Am.* 1.9.19–20):

ille graves urbes, hic durae limen amicae
obsidet; hic portas frangit, at ille fores.

That one besieges forbidding cities; this one a hard mistress' threshold;
that one smashes gates, but this one doors.

With such refractions of the accustomed discourse of love, Ovid was the first of the elegists whose erotic adventures came to be seen clearly as a creation of poetic fiction. By thus carrying to absurdity the confessional posturing of his predecessors in company with the civic orthodoxy against which they themselves are protesting, his *amator* luxuriates in the role of socially useless citizen that the Imperial Symbolic has foisted upon him while implicitly declaring his superiority to that code because his alternative life style is safe and enjoyable.

Another way in which Rome gives shape and meaning to elegy is in its capacity as hypothetical audience, the collectivity before which the elegist struts and frets his obsession. This should in no way surprise insofar as Roman character is public character, prepared and projected for external viewing, and elegiac discourse, as already noted, is a publically exhibitionist stand within cultural context. Thus by infolding Rome's spectatorship, the elegist dictates responses, creating his readership in a number of guises: censorious, envious, imitative, impressionable and often prone to gossip, sometimes knowing what the elegist himself does not know. The elegist's non-conformity depends upon this response, which ostensibly merges poems and life-style lending to representation a sense of intimate reality that, in the history of reading, has made this interrelationship appear as narrative and given *persona* the look of autobiography.

One strain of response from this audience emphasizes *Romanitas* in terms of the traditional Symbolic, the *mos maiorum* (ancestral traditions) from which the speaker willfully deviates. Within his rustic ambience the Tibullan elegist characterizes himself as a stay-at-home, contrasting his inclinations with those of Messalla to whose exemplary generalship a house decked with spoils of conquest (*exuvias*) bears witness. Tenderly addressing his mistress, he externalizes his own portrait from a Messalla-like perspective (1.1. 57–58):

non ego laudari curo, mea Delia, tecum
dum modo sim, quaeso segnis inersque vocer.

I care not to be praised, my Delia, so long as I
may be with you, lazy and immobile let me be called.

Yet in the very act of inviting this critical inspection, the elegist convenes another audience of coeval youths and maidens who cannot return dry-eyed from his funeral, whenever it may occur.

Propertius' watchers appear first as an undefined contingent of solicitous friends, wanting but unable to reverse his fall or bring aid to the maddened mind (1.1.25–26). Like Tibullus, he warns these spectators against feeling immunity from a fate that could strike anyone (35–38). With the increase of his poetic confidence – this at least being a narrative that the poems do develop – external regard becomes a broader confirmation of the legend that his work has created. A hypothetical question [from Maecenas] concerning the source and tone of his many *amores* introduces the poetic schedule of poem 2.1. But others beside Maecenas are reading his poems. Poetry is self-exposure and gives credible substantiality to the voice that speaks it and no less to Cynthia its subject. Responses weave the vacillations of the lover's fortunes into the life of the city. The talkative crowd sees more quickly than the lover the discrepancy between his dedication and her conduct. Her reputation is carried throughout all Rome (2.5.1–2). In the cluster of infidelity poems at the center of the book the very spread of his fame becomes a point of reproach. His Cynthia has been read throughout the whole forum (2.24A.1–2). True, as he acknowledges, but his promiscuity only matches hers. Another of his turns makes him an object of wonder, called *potens* (“powerful”) through out the city because of the beautiful girl in his service. Likewise there is a note of pride when hard critics fault his *convivia* (“sociable gatherings,” 2.30B.1–4), another indication that the poems have public airings. In the sequential declarations of artistic credo opening the third book, the crowd of writers behind the poet's triumphal chariot bespeaks an ever-growing fame. Apollo again warns him off lofty subjects but defines his influence in the person of an ideal reader, the *puella* who drops his little book on a cushion, expecting her lover as she reads (3.3.19–20). Fantasies merge into real life. But it is ultimately the *convivia* that send back his image of self as an object of laughter for his five years' fidelity (3.25.1–4).

While Propertius plays upon the affective power of his elegy as a stimulus to fantasies, Ovid, once love has trapped him, makes himself an example. He begins the sphragis poem of his first book with a challenge to cavil (*Livor edax*) but only to contrast the fame he seeks with merely mortal goals (*Am.* 1.15.1–8). Giving to *canar* (“let me be sung”) the double meaning of both “recited” and “celebrated,” he seeks worldwide resonance (1.15.8: *in toto semper ...orbe canar*). He carries this audience over into the beginning of his second book as he warns off stern moralists with a ritual formula *procul este severi* (“stand back, critics”) and crafts his ideal readers as those whom verse can empower: the virgin bride not cold to her husband and the youth newly come to love. He seeks an audience ready to recognize him as the image of themselves (2.1.5–10). As if the elegist weren't encouraging it, Ovid's readers make the ultimate mistake of confusing poetry with reality. Playing with the confusion of life-style and poetry has been a part of Roman elegy from the start, but Ovid carries it to extreme. We see a sign of this in the penultimate poem of book two where he boasts that the personifications of his *Heroides* letters are so convincing that they have provoked answers from the fickle lovers to whom they are addressed (2.18.21–38). Contending for his allegiance, personified Muses of Elegy

and Tragedy point to his citywide notoriety (3.1.15–22). But finally persuasiveness redounds to his disadvantage because his talent has prostituted his mistress; his very hands have opened her door (3.12). Are readers so credulous, he asks, not to know the genius of poets for inventing all that they write?

Confusion of life and art is the operational premise of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. Citing experience as the basis of his knowledge, the *magister amoris* capitalizes upon the success of the *Amores*. Now his readers become pupils with whom he promises to share his secrets, instructing all Romans in the doctrine and culture that is their true, legitimate heritage as the people of Venus' city. As Wallace-Hadrill notes, Augustan neighborhood divisions ordered the city (2008, 275–277). Likewise, the *magister* outlines a cartography. Citing the examples of hunter and fisherman, he directs the would-be lover where to capture his prey, irreverently giving new utility to the Julian Forum and Livia's porticus. Not only does he adapt vocabulary and techniques of the regime-affirmative didactic but actually seizes control of the *princeps* himself by imitation and implication in his project. As the mastermind of the Sabine abduction, Romulus knew how to reward his subjects. Both the theater and the circus to which the *magister* sends his pupils are Augustan benefactions; he had built the Theater of Marcellus and enhanced the Circus Maximus by additions, most conspicuously the granite obelisk installed in 10 B.C.E. just before the date of the poem.

Surveying the city in *Ars Amatoria*'s third book, he allows that Rome may be "golden", stocked with handsome buildings and the world's material wealth, but these properties are not why he values the city (*Ars* 3.127–128):

sed quia cultus adest nec nostros mansit in annos
rusticitas priscis illa superstes avis.

But because refinement is present nor does there linger in
our time that countrification, survival from early grandfathers.

Given that *cultus* ("refinement") is the key doctrine of *Ars Amatoria*'s teachings, there is no mistaking a new Symbolic in competition with the Imperial and wholly unified with the elegist's Imaginary – in writing at least.

Excepting the Roman aetiologies of Propertius' fourth book, the *Ars Amatoria* shows Ovid as the most topographical of the elegists, but his fullest itinerary, indeed the only one that a modern reader can track on a map of the ancient city, is the course that Ovid's book follows in *Tristia* 3.1 coming as a visitor (3.1.20 *hospes*) in search of a welcome or reunion with sibling books. Allen Miller argues that Ovid's exilic poems do deserve a place in Roman love elegy, observing that their speaking voice is that of the *exclusus amator* shut out from Rome's closed door (2004, 211–212). Indeed the cartography of *Tristia* 3.1 does replay the paraclausithyron as a trek from door to door. Despite professions of having relinquished amatory instruction (1–4), the book finds himself expelled from the Palatine library where none of his siblings (*fratres*) have shelf-room, gains no access to Octavia's porticus and discovers even the Atrium of Liberty closed (3.1.63–73). On the Palatine Hill he confronts an imposing, unfamiliar portal: conspicuous doorposts gleaming with arms, roofing fit for a god, and an oak-leaf crown above (33–36). In the face of these embellishments, the impressionable visitor loses his bearings and takes the building for the temple of Capitoline Jove. No mistake (*non fallimur*, 37) says the visiting book, but the obvious confusion highlights the pretension by which the proprietor of this

domus has, to all effects and purposes, made a bid to be Jove. Thus, in a place where the imperial cartographer has asserted his ownership of the city, the elegist retains his right to assign meanings of his own.

FURTHER READING

The majority of studies in this area focus on actual monuments, with Propertius' Fourth Book (Rothwell 1996; Fantham 1997; Janan 2004; Welch 2005) and Tibullus 2.5 (Lee-Stecum 2000) commanding most attention by reason of their play-off between past and present. For the actual state of the city and its contemporary architectural development, Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor 1988) remains the influential treatment. Diane Favro, *The Urban Images of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge 1996) enlarges upon Zanker with very detailed treatment of Augustus' restructured topography, but also an exaggeratedly negative assessment of the Republican city and a pervasive, adulatory slant toward the *princeps* himself. Essays in Jas Elsner, ed. *Art and Text in Roman Culture* (Cambridge 1996) explore monuments and ideology with interdisciplinary coverage.

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PART III

Influences

CHAPTER 10

Callimachus and Roman Elegy

Richard Hunter

Callimachus

Callimachus is the central figure in the poetry and intellectual life of third-century Alexandria, the capital of the Ptolemaic empire and the greatest centre of scholarship and literary production in the Greek world after Alexander. Callimachus was a native of Cyrene, but worked at Alexandria during the reigns (at least) of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and III Euergetes. Most of his extant poetry cannot be dated with any confidence, although much may belong to the 270s, and his influence on other poets seems to have established itself early. He was closely associated with the court and the ruling family: he wrote an epithalamium for Arsinoe (fr. 392), whose marriage to her brother, Ptolemy II, probably belongs to the first half of the 270s, and substantial fragments of his poem on her death (270 or 268 BCE) and apotheosis also survive (fr. 228). From a quarter of a century later come major poems for Berenice II, who married Euergetes in 245 (cf. below); Callimachus' career may have lasted into the 230s. Although Callimachus appears never to have held the post of Librarian at Alexandria, his scholarly work placed him at the very heart of the "Museum" (Μουσεῖον, "shrine of the Muses"), the institution, with its associated Library, through which the Ptolemies attracted and encouraged the work of scholars and scientists and laid their claim to be the new home of the Greek intellectual heritage (Pfeiffer 1968, Fraser 1972, I 305–35). Callimachus' scholarly work in the Ptolemaic Library was crucial in the organization and cataloging, and hence preservation, of classical literature. The *Pinakes* ("Lists," frs. 429–53 Pf.), a kind of descriptive catalogue, arranged broadly by "genre," of the Alexandrian Library's holdings and hence of virtually all of Greek literature was Callimachus' major scholarly undertaking; much of the information which has filtered down to us about lost Greek literature may ultimately derive from this vast project.

Callimachus' poetic output is remarkably diverse, even if we limit ourselves merely to those poems about which we can be reasonably confident. His epigrams are among the most innovative and surprising of the very large corpus of Hellenistic epigrams which survives; the *Iambi*, in a variety of meters as well as the choliambic rhythm inherited from archaic *iambos*, evoke the model of the aggressive poetry of Hipponax, but range across Callimachus' own poetic programme, criticism of contemporary mores and morals, fable, cult aetiology, and occasional themes, and their influence is particularly visible in Horace's *Epodes* and *Satires* (Kerkhecker 1999, Acosta-Hughes 2002). The *Hecale*, a hexameter poem of uncertain length (?? c.1200 verses), told the story of how Theseus, on his way to fight the bull of Marathon, was entertained in the Attic countryside by a woman called Hecale, when he took shelter in her hut from a storm; on returning after his triumph over the bull, the hero found that Hecale had died, and so he gave her name to the local deme and founded a shrine of Zeus Hekaleios (Hollis 2009). This poem too was very influential, both in terms of its narrative organization and because of its central depiction of Hecale's simple life (cf. Ovid's "Baucis and Philemon," *Met.* 8.626ff). Six hymns, to Zeus, Apollo, Artemis, the island of Delos, Athena and Demeter also survive; the model here is clearly the longer *Homeric Hymns*, but two Callimachean innovations were to prove particularly important for Roman poetry. The *Hymn to Athena*, the central myth of which is the story of how the goddess blinded Teiresias for unwittingly seeing her bathe in a mountain pool together with Teiresias' mother, is in elegiacs, rather than hexameters, and this raises issues of the difference between elegiac and hexameter narrative, issues which were to inform Roman poetic narrative (Hinds 1987, 99–134). Secondly, three of Callimachus' hymns are "mimetic," i.e. they are set at a cultic occasion in honor of the god, and the festival is imagined as taking place as the poem progresses. This experimental form, which for Callimachus was importantly an attempt to recuperate the contexts and atmosphere of archaic choral lyric, proved very influential. A poem such as Tibullus 2.1, which describes a rural rite of purification in progress (*quisquis adest, faueat: fruges lustramus et agros*, 1, "all present should keep holy silence; we are purifying the crops and field"), is in part a Romanization of this form (Cairns 1979, 126–134).

Unsurprisingly, given the areas that the god controlled, it is Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* that is most often echoed in Roman poetry. The end of that poem is the source of much of the language and imagery of purity, fresh streams and smallness, and their opposite (e.g. Horace, *Sat.* 1.4.11), with which Roman poets so frequently described what they and those like them did:

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὕατα λάθριος εἶπεν
 'οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν αἰοῖδον ὃς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος αἰεῖδει.
 τὸν Φθόνον ὠπόλλων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὥδέ τ' εἶπεν
 'Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ
 λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἔλκει.
 Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
 ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρὴ τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
 πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς ἄκρον ἄωτον.
 χαῖρε, ἄναξ· ὁ δὲ Μῶμος, ἴν' ὁ Φθόνος, ἐνθα νέοιτο.

(Callim. *Hymn to Apollo* 105–13)

Envy spoke surreptitiously into Apollo's ear: "I do not admire the poet whose song is not even as much as the sea." Apollo kicked away Envy with his foot and spoke as follows: "Great is the stream of the Assyrian river, but its waters sweep along much of earth's rubbish and much refuse. It is not from every source that the Melissai bring water to Demeter, but from a stream which rises pure and untainted from a sacred fountain, a trickle which is the very perfection of water."

(All translations in this essay are by the author).

The earlier part of the poem, set within a Cyrenean rite in honor of the god whose epiphany from within the temple is expected imminently, brings together the power of Apolline song and links the god to the poet's mortal ruler in a way that would also influence Roman poets:

εὐφημεῖτ' αἰόντες ἐπ' Ἀπόλλωνος αἰοιδῆι.
 εὐφημεῖ καὶ πόντος, ὅτε κλείουσιν αἰοδοί
 ἢ κίθαριν ἢ τόξα, Λυκωρέος ἔντεα Φοίβου.
 οὐδὲ Θέτις Ἀχιλῆα κινύρεται αἶλινα μήτηρ,
 ὀππὸθ' ἰὴ παιῖον ἰὴ παιῖον ἀκούσῃ.
 καὶ μὲν ὁ δακρυόεις ἀναβάλλεται ἄλγεα πέτρος,
 ὅστις ἐνὶ Φρυγίῃ διερὸς λίθος ἐστήρικται,
 μάρμαρον ἀντὶ γυναικὸς οἰζυρόν τι χανούσης.
 ἰὴ ἰὴ φθέγγεσθε· κακὸν μακάρεσσιν ἐρίζειν.
 ὃς μάχεται μακάρεσσιν, ἐμῶι βασιλῇ μάχοιτο·
 ὅστις ἐμῶι βασιλῇ, καὶ Ἀπόλλωνι μάχοιτο.
 τὸν χορὸν ὠπόλλων, ὃ τι οἱ κατὰ θυμὸν αἰεῖδει,
 τιμήσει· δύναται γάρ, ἐπεὶ Διὶ δεξιὸς ἦσται.

(Callim. *Hymn to Apollo* 17–29)

Keep holy silence as you listen to the song for Apollo; the sea too keeps holy silence, when poets celebrate the lyre or the bow, the weapons of Lycorean Phoebus. Not even Thetis, his mother, mourns in lamentation for Achilles, when she hears "*Hie Paieon, hie Paieon*." The tearful rock also defers its suffering, the drenched stone cliff in Phrygia, a marble monument like a woman open-mouthed in woe. Cry *hie hie*! It is a bad thing to compete with the Blessed Ones. He who fights with the Blessed Ones would fight with my king; who fights with my king, would fight with Apollo also. Apollo will honor the chorus because its song pleases him; he can do this as he sits at Zeus' right hand.

In 4.6 Propertius explicitly picks up this Callimachean baton (Cairns 1984). This poem describes the origins of the temple of Apollo on the Palatine in Octavian's victory at Actium, and the opening alludes to the end of the Callimachean hymn in turning a poetic celebration into a ritual act after the Callimachean model:

sacra facit uates: sint ora fauentia sacris.
 et cadat ante meos icta iuuenca focus.
 serta Philiteis certet Romana corymbis,
 et Cyrenaeas urna ministret aquas.

(Prop. 4.6.1–4)

The priest is conducting rites: let mouths keep reverend silence for the rites, and may a heifer fall before my altar. May the Roman garland rival the ivy of Philitas and the urn pour out the water of Cyrene.

The address to the Muse that follows, however, wittily reverses the Callimachean hymn, while preserving the link between song and ruler. In Callimachus everything and everyone, even those who have suffered grievously at Apollo's hands, are reverently silent when Apollo is celebrated in song; in Propertius, Jupiter himself is asked to drop everything else while Caesar's praises are sung:

Musa, Palatini referemus Apollinis aedem:
 res est, Calliope, digna fauore tuo.
 Caesaris in nomen ducuntur carmina: Caesar
 dum canitur, quaeso, Iuppiter, ipse uaces.
 (Prop. 4.6.11–14)

Muse, we shall describe the temple of Palatine Apollo: Calliope, the subject is worthy of your favor. The song is to the glory of Caesar: while Caesar is being sung, Jupiter, may you yourself pay attention.

In explaining the origin of the temple, Propertius keeps to the aetiological project which dominates the claim of Book 4 to show us the “Roman Callimachus” (4.1.64), for it is aetiological elegy which was Callimachus’ greatest claim to fame in antiquity.

The Aitia

In his survey of the Greek literature which budding Roman orators might read with profit, Quintilian wastes few words on Greek elegy:

I am neither unaware of the [hexameter poets] whom I omit nor do I condemn them outright; something of value can be found in all of them. But let us return to them when our powers have been perfected and properly constituted; as is often the case in grand banquets, we welcome the variety afforded by less good food, once we are sated with the finest dishes. Then there will be time (*uacabit*) to have a look also at elegy; in this field Callimachus is regarded as the leader (*princeps*), and most people give Philis second place.
 (Quint. 10.1.57–9)

Both the juxtaposition to minor hexameter poets, who provide no more than a bit of variety to a jaded palate, and the dismissive “then there will be time” make clear that Quintilian does not regard the reading of Greek elegy as a very serious occupation, an attitude which in fact might reflect some of the ironic self-construction of Roman elegists as devoted to “light” verse. Be that as it may, there is in fact a reasonably solid body of evidence, both explicit and implicit, that by at least the first century BCE, and probably earlier, Callimachus’ pre-eminence in the field of elegy was acknowledged (Hunter 2011). Callimachus owed that position to the *Aitia*, in which in four books (perhaps some five-six thousand verses in all) he recounted the “causes” or “origins” of city foundations, local myths and cultic practices from all over the Greek world. The whole was introduced by a polemical and programmatic prologue, the famous “Reply to the Telchines” (fr. 1 Pf.), in which the poet allusively set out his poetic principles and proclaimed them as endorsed by Apollo; perhaps no passage of Greek poetry was echoed in Roman poetry more frequently than the “Reply.”

In Books 1 and 2, many, if not all, of the individual *aitia* were responses by the Muses to questions put by the poet, who represented himself as dreaming that he was a young man transported from North Africa to Mt Helicon where the Muses instructed him, as once they had instructed Hesiod in the *Theogony*; whereas, however, the Muses had told Hesiod what to sing, they were now compelled to answer Callimachus' often very obscure questions. In Books 3 and 4, on the other hand, Callimachus seems no longer to have used the organizing device of a conversation with the Muses; rather, individual *aitia* (of very various length) followed each other without transitional passages, and the constant presence of the Muses gave way to the poet himself and a variety of rather unusual narrators (a long-dead poet, fr. 64, a lock of hair, fr. 110, perhaps a speaking wall, fr. 97). Some individual *aitia* now assumed the look of individual "poems" marked by clear opening and closural devices; it is consonant with this change that there is evidence that some at least circulated as individual poems before as well as after their inclusion within the *Aitia*, and the aetiological direction of several narratives seems very weak by comparison with the narratives of Books 1 and 2. There are reasons, in addition to the changes in structure, for believing that Books 3 and 4, together with the "Reply to the Telchines" and the "Epilogue" (fr. 112), were added by Callimachus many years after the publication of an original two-book *Aitia*. Books 3 and 4 were framed by elegiac encomia of Callimachus' royal patrons. Book 3 was introduced by the "Victoria Berenices," a grand epinician elegy in honor of the Cyrenean princess who married Ptolemy III Euergetes in 245, which told the story of Heracles' founding of the Nemean games but gave pride of place within that story to Heracles' entertainment by the peasant Molorchus, who eked out a humble living in land devastated by the Nemean lion, and the description of Molorchus' battle with mice takes poetic precedence over Heracles' battle with the lion. The final place at the end of Book 4 was given to the "Coma Berenices," the witty celebration of the catasterism of a lock of Queen Berenice's hair; through Catullus' translation (Poem 66), this poem too was to become a central document in the Roman adoption of a Hellenistic poetic aesthetic (cf. below).

Until Propertius 4 and Ovid's *Fasti*, cult and ritual explanation are only an occasional preoccupation of Roman elegy, and the importance of Callimachus for Roman elegy as a whole must be sought elsewhere. First, there was, as we have seen, his pre-eminence among Greek elegists; he was not a figure to be ignored. Callimachus offered a major body of elegiac poetry which was not only self-conscious about its stylistic choices, but which gave a prominent place to the voice of the poet, which is never far away, even in the narrative sections. Although the *Aitia* is not about "the poet's own emotional experiences" in the way that Roman elegy purports to be, it did have at its centre a poetic voice with very clearly defined characteristics and obsessions. There has been much discussion (e.g. Ross 1975) of whether Roman poets did indeed have models of Greek "subjective love elegy" which have been lost to us – the evidence of papyri is here tantalizing but quite inconclusive (Butrica 1996, Lightfoot 1999, 26–8) – but what is clear is that the Callimachean poetic voice offered a model which at least suggested what might be possible. Moreover, Catullus had – for whatever reasons – given Callimachus an honored position in his elegiac production (cf. below), regardless of what view we take of the formation of the Catullan collection and of the form in which his poems were available to his successors, and he thus set out a mode and a model for those who followed.

Catullus 66 is a translation of the poem that had been placed in the privileged final position of the *Aitia* (Marinone 1997). When Ptolemy III Euergetes went off to the Syrian War, his recently married bride, the Cyrenean princess (and Euergetes' second cousin) Berenice, vowed that she would dedicate a lock of her hair to the gods if her husband returned safe; when he did so, Berenice duly fulfilled her vow, almost certainly in the temple of her deified "mother," Aphrodite-Arsinoe at Cape Zephyrium. When the lock subsequently disappeared, the learned astronomer Konon announced that he had identified it, now catasterized as a constellation, in a previously unnamed group of stars near Leo and Virgo; Callimachus celebrated this splendid event in an elegiac poem in which the lock expresses its regret that it is no longer on the queen's head (fr.110 Pf.). The central conceit of the poem is an analogy between the separation of the lock from the queen's head and the queen's own enforced separation from her beloved husband and, in the terminology of the Ptolemaic court, "brother." This poem, however wittily encomiastic, is certainly erotic (e.g. Cat. 66.13–14), and, although the poet himself is not a character in the poem, it is an entirely mimetic and dramatic set of complaints to a "mistress," who is both referred to in the third person and addressed in the second. Moreover, Poem 66 is brought into Catullus' own "subjective" experience through the theme of "separation" from a beloved brother, as Poem 65, which introduces it, is devoted to Catullus' grief at the death of his brother. After allowance for all the differences, we are here not so far from "Latin love elegy," and Callimachus is already fashioned as an authorizing voice in this kind of poetry. Moreover, Poem 65 concludes (Hunter 1993, see below) with an allusion to another erotic episode of the *Aitia* that was central to the Roman reception of Callimachus (cf. esp. Ovid, *Her.* 20–21) and may indeed have been principally responsible for the ease with which Callimachus could be represented as a "love poet." The allusion reinforces the link between Catullus' separation from his brother and the separation of lovers, between in fact the two most painful types of *cura* (Cat. 65.1, 66.23).

The episode from Book 3 of the *Aitia* to which Catullus alludes in Poem 65 (Fantuzzi-Hunter 2004, 60–6) is the story of how Acontius of Ceos fell in love with Cydippe of Naxos when he saw her at the festival of Apollo on Delos. He inscribed on an apple an oath by Artemis to marry Acontius, threw the apple towards Cydippe and her nurse, and Cydippe trapped herself by reading out the oath in the holy precinct of the goddess. When, back on Naxos, Cydippe's father tried to marry his daughter off to another suitor, she repeatedly fell ill, until her father consulted Apollo and learned the truth; the god told him to fulfill Cydippe's oath, and so the couple were married. Before the happy outcome, the lovesick Acontius sought the solitude of the countryside, where he poured out his woes, apostrophized Cydippe directly (fr. 74) and carved her name on trees; this scene was particularly important for Roman poets (cf. Virg., *Ecl.* 2, 10; Prop. 1.18), but unfortunately only a few verses survive. The main surviving fragment (fr. 75) tells rather of Cydippe's father's unsuccessful attempts to marry her off, of the god's revelation of the truth, of the happy wedding night and then – perhaps to us most surprising – of the contents of the chronicle of the Cean historian, "old Xenomedes," in which Callimachus claims to have found the story. Two aspects of this long poem may be highlighted from the perspective of Roman elegy.

First, Callimachus achieves a striking variety of narrative mode – the laments of an unhappy lover, the witty aetiology of ritual practice and medical lore (fr. 75.1–19), the

riddling speech of the Callimachean Apollo, the catalogue-style account of the contents of Xenomedes' history; although the whole was considerably longer than any single poem of the Roman elegists, such variety (ποικιλία) and the juxtaposition of different styles and moods seems to have influenced, particularly, Propertius in his more complex poems. Such variety, though of course with different elements on each occasion, seems indeed to have been the hallmark of all the longer episodes of the *Aitia* that we can reconstruct with any confidence, such as the "Victoria Berenices" (cf. above). Secondly, there is the poet's repeated apostrophe of Acontius and the associated projection of his character's emotions:

οὐ σε δοκέω τημοῦτος, Ἀκόντιε, νυκτὸς ἐκείνης
 ἀντί κε, τῇ μίτρῃ ἤψαο παρθενίης,
 οὐ σφυρὸν Ἰφίκλειον ἐπιτρέχον ἀσταχύεσσιν
 οὐδ' ἂ Κελαινίτης ἐκτεάτιστο Μίδης
 δέξασθαι, ψήφου δ' ἂν ἐμῆς ἐπιμάρτυρες εἶεν
 οἵτινες οὐ χαλεποῦ νήιδές εἰσι θεοῦ.
 (Callim. fr. 75.44–9)

I do not think, Acontius, that you would then have accepted, in place of that night on which you touched the maiden girdle, the ankle of Iphicles that ran over ears of wheat or all the possessions of Midas of Celaenae. All who are not ignorant of the cruel god would bear witness to my verdict.

With chaste discretion the poet invites us to imagine the joys of the wedding-night, and clearly intimates that he too is an initiate of "the cruel god." Although Cydippe was perhaps not as familiar with sexual games as Cynthia, Acontius might well have exclaimed, as Propertius was to do:

o me felicem! nox o mihi candida! et o tu
 lectule deliciis facte beate meis!
 quam multa apposita narramus uerba lucerna,
 quantaque sublato lumine rixa fuit!
 (Prop. 2.15.1–4)

O happy me! O glorious night! And o you lovely bed made blessed by my delight! How much we said as the lamp burned beside us, and how we wrestled when the light was removed!

In Callimachus the device of apostrophe both marks and complicates the distance between poet and character; the subject is "your desire" (fr. 75.53), "your fierce love" (fr. 75.75), but the poem is "my Calliope" (fr. 75.77). Roman poets were to take over this interrelation between (fictionalized) love and the writing of poetry and create a new alignment, in which, however, the Callimachean pattern was to remain still visible.

This debt to the poetic voice of the *Aitia* is of course harder to quantify and to describe than another important debt to Greek poetry in the same area. Roman elegy had a rich set of "subjective" elegiac verse on which it could draw in the corpus of Hellenistic epigram, and scholars have long noted that many of the themes of Greek epigram – the symposium, the lover locked out, the unfaithful beloved – all recur in Roman elegy; in epigram the poetic voice is, as in Roman elegy, at the centre of the

poetic material and, as in elegy, it may be confident or downcast, ironically knowing or naively enthusiastic. Callimachus' epigrams were, unsurprisingly, influential both in general and for specific motifs. Thus, for example, Propertius' teasing advice to Ponticus (1.9) is not too far from Callimachus' uses of his experience to diagnose the lovesickness of another:

ἔλκος ἔχων ὁ ξεῖνος ἐλάνθανεν· ὥς ἀνηρὸν
 πνεῦμα διὰ στηθέων—εἶδες; —ἀνηγάγετο,
 τὸ τρίτον ἥνικ' ἔπινε, τὰ δὲ ῥόδα φυλλοβολεῦντα
 τῶνδ' ῥος ἀπὸ στεφάνων πάντ' ἐγένοντο χαμαί·
 ὥπτηται μέγα δὴ τι, μὰ δαίμονας· οὐκ ἀπὸ ῥυσμοῦ
 εἰκάζω, φωρὸς δ' ἵχνια φῶρ ἔμαθον.

(Callim. *Epig.* 43 Pf)

The stranger was wounded and we had not noticed. How pained and deep he sighed – did you see? – when he drank the third cup, and the roses of his garland fell and littered the floor. He is, by the gods, very badly burned: my conjecture is not wrong – as a thief I recognize the tracks of a thief.

Nevertheless, the undoubted importance of Greek epigram for Roman elegy should not obscure the role played by the poetic voice of the *Aitia* in the fashioning of the Roman elegiac voice; in particular, it is from the *Aitia*, with its narration of events from a past which was sometimes conceived as remote and distant and sometimes as nearly contemporary, that Roman poets may have learned the creative use of mythic analogues from the past to describe their own “modern” position, which is such a feature of Roman elegy.

“Callimachean” Poetry

Roman poets and critics loved to conjure up, and conjure with, the name of Callimachus. In *Amores* 1.15, for example, Ovid fashions himself as a Callimachus who, in the manner of the “Reply to the Telchines” and the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*, has to respond to envious criticism; in Ovid's case, however – unlike Callimachus' – the criticism is not about the style of his poetry, but rather the very fact that he writes poetry rather than performing some useful service like being a soldier or a lawyer. In then exemplifying the immortal fame which great poets enjoy, and which will be his fate also, Ovid places Callimachus after Homer and Hesiod and before Sophocles, the classical tragedian *par excellence*:

mortale est, quod quaeris, opus; mihi fama perennis
 quaeritur, in toto semper ut orbe canar.
 uiuet Maenonides, Tenedos dum stabit et Ide,
 dum rapidas Simois in mare uoluet aquas;
 uiuet et Ascreus, dum mustis uua tumebit,
 dum cadet incurua falce resecta Ceres;
 Battiaes semper toto cantabitur orbe:

quamuis ingenio non ualet, arte ualet;
 nulla Sophocleo ueniet iactura cothurno;
 cum sole et luna semper Aratus erit;
 dum fallax seruus, durus pater, improba lena
 uiuent et meretrix blanda, Menandros erit.
 (Ovid *Am.* 1.15.7–18)

The task you seek is mortal; I seek immortal fame, to be sung always over the whole world. Maeon's son [i.e. Homer] will live, as long as Tenedos shall stand and Ida, as long as the Simois shall roll her rushing waters to the sea; the man of Ascrea also [i.e. Hesiod] shall live, as long as the grape swells with new wine, as long as the crop shall fall as it is cut by the curving sickle. The son of Battus will always be sung over the whole world: though he convinces not in genius, he does so in art. The buskin of Sophocles will never topple over, and Aratus will always exist, as long as do the sun and moon. While the deceitful slave, the harsh father, the wicked bawd and the smooth-talking courtesan live, there will be Menander.

The disruption of chronological order (McKeown 1989, 394–5) draws particular attention to “the son of Battus,” i.e. Callimachus, as does the fact that the patronymic *Battiades* stands in parallel, in both form and rhythm, to *Maeonides*, “son of Maeon,” i.e. Homer, the greatest of all poets, in whose shadow every poet must stand. Moreover, Ovid perhaps echoes what is for us, and may well have been for him, the entry of the form *Battiades* into Latin literature:

numquam ego te, uita frater amabilior,
 aspiciam posthac? at certe semper amabo,
 semper maesta tua carmina morte canam,
 qualia sub densis ramorum concinit umbris
 Daulias, absumpti fata gemens Ityli.
 sed tamen in tantis maeroribus, Ortale, mitto
 haec expressa tibi carmina Battiadae ...
 (Cat. 65.10–16)

Brother dearer than life, shall I never see you hereafter? Certainly I shall always love you, always shall I sing songs made sad by your death, such as the Daulian bird [i.e. the nightingale] sings in the thick shade of branches as she mourns the fate of Itylus, snatched away. Nevertheless, in the midst of such great grief, Hortalus, I send you this translated poem of the son of Battus ...

Catullus will “always” sing sad songs like the nightingale, a quintessentially “elegiac” bird (Hunter 2006a, 29–30), and his first fulfillment of that pledge is a translation of a poem of “the son of Battus,” the “Coma Berenices” (cf. above). Although Ovid's *cantabitur* (*Am.* 1.15.13) would fit many sorts of verse, in juxtaposition to the hexameter poetry of Homer and Hesiod, it strongly suggests the elegiacs for which Callimachus was best known and of which he was, already by this date, the acknowledged master (Hunter 2011). Moreover, Ovid's claim that Callimachus “will be sung over the whole world” (v. 13) echoes Ovid's own hopes for himself (v. 8), thus linking the two elegiac poets together; the idea may well, as a number of critics have suggested, echo something in Callimachus' poetry itself, but it also points to another tradition and context which was very important to Callimachus.

Around the name of Theognis of Megara (probably mid-sixth century BCE) clustered a great deal of sympotic, erotic, political and moralizing elegy; nearly 1400 verses are preserved in a corpus which presents very considerable problems of authenticity and arrangement. Nevertheless, among the best known passages that there is no reason to doubt are indeed the work of Theognis himself is the following, in which the poet prophesies immortality for his *erómenos*, Kyrnos, because Theognis' own poetry will be immortal:

σοὶ μὲν ἐγὼ πτέρ' ἔδωκα, σὺν οἷς ἐπ' ἀπείρονα πόντον
 πωτήσῃ, κατὰ γῆν πᾶσαν ἀειρόμενος
 ῥηϊδίως· θοίνης δὲ καὶ εἰλαπίνῃσι παρέσσει
 ἐν πάσαις πολλῶν κείμενος ἐν στόμασιν,
 καὶ σε σὺν αὐλίσκοισι λιγυφθόγγοις νέοι ἄνδρες
 εὐκόσμως ἔρατοὶ καλὰ τε καὶ λιγέα
 αἰσονται. καὶ ὅταν δνοφερῆς ὑπὸ κεῦθεσι γαίης
 βῆς πολυκωκύτους εἰς Αἰδαο δόμους,
 οὐδέποτε· οὐδὲ θανὼν ἀπολείς κλέος, ἀλλὰ μελήσεις
 ἄφθιτον ἀνθρώποις· αἰὲν ἔχων ὄνομα,
 Κύρνε, καθ' Ἑλλάδα γῆν στρωφώμενος, ἡδ' ἀνὰ νήσους
 ἰχθυόεντα περὶ πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον,
 οὐχ ἵππων νώτοισιν ἐφήμενος, ἀλλὰ σε πέμψει
 ἀγαλὰ Μουσάων δῶρα ἰοστεφάνων.
 πᾶσι δ' ὅσοιςι μέμλε καὶ ἐσσομένοιςιν αἰοιδῇ
 ἔσσει ὁμῶς, ὄφρ' ἂν γῆ τε καὶ ἥλιος.

(Theognis 237–52)

I have given you wings with which you will fly over the boundless sea, soaring easily over the whole land. At every dinner and feast you will be present, lying on the lips of many, and beautiful young men will sing you in splendid order in lovely, clear voices to the accompaniment of clear-voiced flutes. When you go to the house of Hades, full of lamentation, beneath the depths of the gloomy earth, not even in death will you lose your fame, but men will know of you, Kyrnos, and your name will be immortal. You will roam over the land of Greece, and through the islands as you travel over the unharvested sea full of fish, not sitting on the backs of horses, but the glorious gifts of the violet-crowned Muses will escort you. You will be a song for all alike who care for the Muses, even men as yet unborn, as long as earth and sun exist.

Theognis prophesies immortality for himself and his addressee, as Gallus may later have done for Lycoris, the female beloved of his elegiac *Amores* (McKeown 1989, 412, and cf. Prop. 2.34.93–4), and Propertius certainly did for Cynthia. That in *Amores* 1.15 Ovid has, and wants us to have, this passage of Theognis in mind cannot perhaps be established beyond all doubt, despite the shared subject-matter, but there seem to be enough shared motifs to make the case a plausible one. Ovid's hope for *fama perennis* (v. 7) looks like a translation of the κλέος ἄφθιτον ("unperishing renown") which is one of the options before Achilles in the *Iliad* (9.413), and which Theognis too evokes in his address to Kyrnos at vv. 245–6; the motif of "the whole world" occurs in Theognis 237–8, "the boundless sea ... the whole land," and cf. also vv. 247–8; that Aratus is to be coterminous "with the sun and the moon" (v. 16) is a common enough idea, but it is tempting to think that Ovid has sharpened the point of Theognis 252, "as long as earth and sun exist," by applying the conceit to a poet who wrote about the heavenly bodies;

finally, it is worth noting that *sublimis*, the epithet which Ovid applies later in this poem to Lucretius (v. 23), evokes the notion of the soaring poet, the idea which Theognis has transferred to Kyrnos. Through allusion to this passage of Theognis, then, Ovid may evoke a sense of elegiac tradition, a chain of great poets, Theognis, Callimachus, Ovid himself, through whom that tradition is constantly refreshed.

Very much, of course, had changed since the days of Theognis, not least the shape of “the whole world.” Theognis’ focus is very much upon “the land of Greece ... and the islands” (v. 247); Kyrnos will be celebrated at symposia, which may take place in very different parts of Greece, but all of which will follow the familiar pattern of élite culture. After Alexander, however, things could never quite be the same again. A century or so after Ovid, Dio Chrysostom writes of Homer’s popularity among the peoples of India (53.6–7), and extant poetry composed in distant kingdoms such as Bactria shows that this is perhaps not merely a literary conceit. For a Roman poet in the time of Augustus, *totus orbis* could, at least in the imagination, be taken quite literally; as Ovid puts it in praising Virgil a few verses later, Rome was now *triumphati ... caput orbis* (“the head of the world over which she had celebrated a triumph,” *Am.* 1.15.26). As for Callimachus, the sphere of influence of the Ptolemies under whom he worked covered not just Egypt and North Africa, but also large parts of the eastern Mediterranean. Theocritus catalogues the realm of Ptolemy II Philadelphus as follows:

καὶ μὴν Φοινίκας ἀποτέμενεται Ἀραβίας τε
καὶ Συρίας Λιβύας τε κελαινῶν τ’ Αἰθιοπῶν·
Παμφύλοισί τε πᾶσι καὶ αἰχμηταῖς Κιλικεσσι
σαμαίνει, Λυκίοις τε φιλοπτολέμοισί τε Καρσί
καὶ νάσοις Κυκλάδεσσιν, ἐπεὶ οἱ νᾶες ἄρισται
πόντον ἐπιπλῶντι, θάλασσα δὲ πᾶσα καὶ αἶα
καὶ ποταμοὶ κελάδοντες ἀνάσσονται Πτολεμαίῳ ...
(Theoc. 17. 86–92)

He takes slices of Phoenicia and Arabia and Syria and Libya and the dark-skinned Ethiopians; all the Pamphylians and the warriors of Cilicia he commands, and the Lycians and the Carians, who delight in war, and the islands of the Cyclades, for his are the finest ships sailing the ocean. All the sea and the land and the crashing rivers are subject to Ptolemy ...

There is here, of course, some exaggeration typical of encomium (Hunter 2003, 159–68), but there is no doubt that, however much Callimachus himself was focused on the élite intellectual culture of Alexandria, the geographical horizon of the context in which he worked was fundamentally changed from that of Theognis. In his *Hymn to Delos* Callimachus makes the fetal Apollo prophesy the power of Philadelphus in terms similar to those of Theocritus:

ἀλλὰ οἱ ἐκ Μοιρέων τις ὀφειλόμενος θεὸς ἄλλος
ἐστί, Σαωτήρων ὕπατον γένος· ὦι ὑπὸ μίτρην
ἵξεται οὐκ ἀέκουσα Μακηδόνι κοινανέεσθαι
ἀμφοτέρῃ μεσόγεια καὶ αἱ πελάγεσσι κáθηνται,
μέχρις ὅπου περάτῃ τε καὶ ὀππóθεν ὠκέες ἵπποι
Ἥελιον φορέουσιν· ὁ δ’ εἴσεται ἦθεα πατρός.
(Callim. *Hymn to Delos* 165–70)

But to her [i.e. Cos] is due from the fates another god, highest offspring of the Saviors. Under his power, quite willing to be governed by a Macedonian, shall come both land masses and the islands in the sea, as far as the western horizon and from where the swift horses bear the sun. And he shall know the ways of his father.

This passage was to prove influential in Roman poetry (Hunter 2006a, 64), but what is important is how the “reality” of this motif, together with the complex Roman fashioning of Alexandria as both model and anti-model for a city that was also a world power, brings Callimachus and the Roman elegists together in yet one more way.

Callimachus did not, of course, merely allude to Ptolemaic power; he celebrated it in many poems, both elegiac and other. If “Battiades” enters Latin literature in Catullus 65, it is perhaps not entirely improbable that Catullus 66, the “Coma Berenices” (cf. above), marked the entry, or perhaps re-entry (Fantuzzi-Hunter 2004, 462–4), of Callimachus as a major presence in Latin poetry, and this is a “courtly” poem *par excellence*. Callimachus’ poem had been placed in the final position of the *Aitia* (see above), where it not only closed the whole collection, but also formed a ring around Books 3 and 4 together with the “Victoria Berenices” (cf. above). If Roman elegists constructed for themselves a sometimes edgy relationship with the Roman government and with the prevailing ideology, then they could not look to Callimachus for any authorizing precedent in this respect. Rather, as is now well recognized, they built a series of provocatively vague assertions of stylistic preference within Callimachus’ elegiac production into an edifice in which elegy stood opposed to epic, and it was the latter which was in turn constructed as embodying official ideology and from which elegiac poets could, in different ways and with different intensities, distance themselves when their poetic purposes called for this. The principal poetic mode for doing this has come to be known as the *recusatio*, that is the “refusal” to write martial epic, particularly (though not exclusively) public poetry in praise of the ruler and the state (Wimmel 1960). Familiarity, and endless modern bibliography, has perhaps lessened the surprise, but it is one of the great wonders of literary history that Callimachus was adopted for such a pattern.

In the “Reply to the Telchines” which stood at the head of the *Aitia*, Callimachus contrasts his own “artful” and “sweet” style with the grandiose “brayings” of other poets, who are not named: “thundering is not my job, but Zeus” (cf. below). He then gives the aetiology of his own style:

καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρῶτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα
 γούνασιν, Ἀπόλλων εἶπεν ὁ μοι Λύκιος·
]ἄοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον
 θρέψαι, τῇ]ν Μοῦσαν δ’ ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην·
 πρὸς δέ σε] καὶ τόδ’ ἄνωγα, τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἄμαξαι
 τὰ στείβειν, ἐτέρων ἴχνια μὴ καθ’ ὁμά
 δίφρον ἐλ]ᾶν μηδ’ οἶμον ἀνά πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
 ἀτρίπτο]υς, εἰ καὶ στεινοτέρην ἐλάσεις·

(Callim. fr.1.21–8)

When I first placed the writing-tablet on my knees, Apollo, the Lycian one, said to me: “... poet, [feed] the sacrificial victim to be as fat as possible, but, my good friend, nourish a slender Muse. [Moreover], this too I bid you: proceed on paths not trodden by wagons, do

not [drive your chariot] in the common tracks of others nor on the broad highway, but on [unworn] roads, even if you will drive a narrower path.

Apollo speaks, as one would expect, in the riddling language appropriate to the prophetic god, but the broad gist is clear enough: *παχύτης* (“fatness”) is appropriate for sacrificial victims which the gods will enjoy, not for poems, where what is needed is rather *λεπταλέον* (“slender and graceful”). Perhaps no passage of Greek poetry is imitated in Roman poetry as frequently, and in so many different ways, as this one. Thus, for example, Propertius explicitly denies the pattern at the head of Book 2,

non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo:
ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit
(Prop. 2.1.3–4)

It is not Calliope, not Apollo who creates these songs for me: my girl herself is the source of my inspiration

but such denial is perhaps already more allusively relevant at the head of Book 1:

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
contactum nullis ante cupidinibus
(Prop. 1.1.1–2)

Cynthia first captured wretched me with her eyes, when I had never before been stained by any desires.

These verses are normally (and rightly) traced back to an epigram of Meleager (*Anth. Pal.* 12.101), whose “Garland” was an important vehicle through which the themes of Greek erotic and sympotic epigram reached Rome, but *Cynthia prima* may also evoke and vary *πρώτιστον ... Ἀπόλλων ... Λύκιος* of the Callimachean “Reply”; *Cynthia* suggests *Κύνθιος*, another epithet of Apollo (taken from a mountain on Delos) which was also used by Callimachus (in “Acontius and Cydippe” in fact, fr. 67.6) and which replaced *Lycius* also in Virgil’s rewriting of the “Reply” (see below).

Virgil reproduced the Callimachean Apollo’s appropriately bucolic reference to “fat victims” at the head of the second half of the *Eclogues*:

prima Syracosio dignata est ludere uersu
nostra neque erubuit siluas habitare Thalea.
cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthia aurem
uellit et admonuit: “pastorem, Tityre, pinguis
pascere oportet ouis, deductum dicere carmen”.
nunc ego (namque super tibi erunt qui dicere laudes,
Vare, tuas cupiant et tristia condere bella)
agrestem tenui meditabor harundine Musam:
non iniussa cano.
(Virg. *Ecl.* 6.1–9)

My Muse first deigned to sport in Syracusan verse and was not ashamed to dwell in the woods. When I was going to sing of kings and battles, the Cynthian one plucked my ear and warned

me: 'Tityrus, a shepherd should feed his sheep to be fat, but sing a fine-spun song'. Now I – for, Varus, there will be no shortage of those who want to sing your praises and to compose poems of grim war – shall practice the rustic Muse on a slender reed. What I sing is not unordered.

Apparently unlike Callimachus, Tityrus was already a poet with a new subject ('kings and battles') when Apollo intervened (Hunter 2006a, 124–9); Tityrus interprets Apollo's words as instructions to abandon the martial poetry of praise and to practice instead the *agrestis Musa* on a *tenuis* (i.e. λεπταλέος) reed pipe. The shifts, easy enough in themselves, from the Callimachean model were to prove crucial (Cameron 1995, 454–83). Callimachus had apparently claimed that his critics wanted him to write a long poem on (? *inter alia*) "kings" (fr. 1.3), but Tityrus has already adopted this project; Apollo causes a change in Tityrus' poetic activity, whereas Callimachus seems to claim that he has always followed Apollo's instructions, given to him when he was a young boy. What Callimachus in fact "rejects" in fr.1 is something he would never have dreamt of writing even in his worst nightmares, namely bad, flabby, pompous poetry, whatever the meter or subject.

This is not the place for a survey of "Callimachean" *recusationes* in Latin elegy, so let one Ovidian example suffice, from the opening poem of Book 2 of the *Amores*, and thus juxtaposed to the Callimachean motifs of 1.15 which we have just considered:

ausus eram, memini, caelestia dicere bella
centimanumque Gyn (et satis oris erat),
cum male se tellus ulta est ingestaque Olympo
ardua deuexum Pelion Ossa tulit:
in manibus nimbos et cum Ioue fulmen habebam,
quod bene pro caelo mitteret ille suo.
clausit amica fores: ego cum Ioue fulmen omisi;
excidit ingenio Iuppiter ipse meo.
Iuppiter, ignoscas: nil me tua tela iuuabant;
clausa tuo maius ianua fulmen habet.
(Ovid *Am.* 2.1.11–20)

I had been bold enough (I remember it) to sing of celestial wars and of hundred-handed Gyn (and my mouth was large enough), when the earth tried without success to avenge herself and lofty Ossa bore sloping Pelion and was piled on Olympus. I had in hand the thunder-clouds and the lightning-bolt, with Jupiter himself, which he was to hurl in successful defense of his heaven. My mistress closed her door; I forgot the bolt and Jupiter: Jupiter himself dropped out of my thoughts. Jupiter, forgive me: your weapons did not help me; a locked door has a more powerful bolt than yours.

Ovid's martial poem, real or otherwise, had been on the grandest possible scale: not for him the mere *tristia bella* of Roman conquest, but the *caelestia bella* of the Gigantomachy (McKeown 1998, 10–11). It seems unlikely that Callimachus would ever have treated the battle of the gods and Giants in any detail, though it is certainly relevant that his reference in the "Reply" to the giant Enceladus imprisoned beneath Sicily (v. 36) evokes Gigantomachy (cf. Prop. 2.1.39–40), and that his rejection of a "loud crashing poem" and of "thundering" could very easily be taken to refer to this subject. Callimachus fr. 1 will therefore not be far away here, and in a passage which may have been in Ovid's mind Propertius explicitly evokes a supposed rejection of

Gigantomachy by Callimachus, in excusing himself to Maecenas for not writing hexameter verse encomiastic of Augustus and his patron (2.1.17–26, 39–42). Nevertheless, Ovid’s claim that he was writing such a poem, presumably in hexameters and on the model of Hesiod’s *Theogony*, when events forced him back to elegy may well look as well to a famous elegiac fragment of Xenophanes of Colophon (late sixth-early fifth century BCE) which prescribes the proper conduct and arrangement of a symposium (fr. 1 West). Much in this passage seems to look forward to “Callimachean” motifs (Hunter 2006a, 36–7), and at the end of the surviving extract the poet turns to the kind of stories appropriate to such an occasion:

οὐ τι μάχας διέπειν Τιτῆνων οὐδὲ Γιγάντων
οὐδὲ <> Κενταύρων, πλάσματα τῶν προτέρων,
ἢ στάσις σφεδανάς· τοῖς οὐδὲν χρηστὸν ἔνεστιν·
θεῶν <δὲ> προμηθεῖην αἰὲν ἔχειν ἀγαθήν.
(Xenoph. fr. 1.21–4)

[One must not] tell of the battles of the Titans or the Giants or the Centaurs, the fictions of men of the past, or of violent disputes: there is nothing of value in them. One must always have good regard to the gods.

With hindsight, Xenophanes’ poem constructs not merely the proper space of the symposium, but also the proper subjects and contexts for elegy. Whether or not Ovid is explicitly thinking of Xenophanes may be debated, but his plea that Jupiter’s weapons, and hence Gigantomachic poetry, “were of no help” when his mistress bolted the door may be seen as an amusingly specific adaptation of Xenophanes’ statement that such battles contained nothing χρηστὸν (“of value”). Propertius makes a similar point more than once, naming rather the poetry of Mimnermus (1.9.9–14) and Philitas and Callimachus (2.34.31–2) as the appropriate poetic models for a man in love to follow.

Whereas Callimachus had, with arch piety, noted that thundering should be left to Zeus, Ovid depicts himself as a Jupiter engaged in a cosmic battle; this is both an example of the common trope by which a poet is said to do what he describes his characters as doing, and perhaps also draws upon what might have been a relatively familiar range of imagery in Hellenistic criticism, whereby the poet hurled around letters, words and sounds, as Zeus did thunder-bolts (Hunter 2006b, 127–8). Be that as it may, the use of Gigantomachic imagery in political contexts was familiar in both Hellenistic literature and art; a story which told of rebellion put down and the establishment of a lawful Olympian order could be made to serve more than one pattern of government and ideology, and such imagery was common in Augustan poetry (Nisbet-Hubbard 1978, 189–90, Hardie 1986, Index s.v. Gigantomachy). This raises the question of whether such material could, by Ovid’s day, still be taken “straight,” i.e. could poetry on such a subject be innocent of “political” resonances? Callimachus himself had made his Apollo term Gaulish mercenaries who rebelled against Philadelphus “late-born Titans” (*Hymn to Delos* 174), and some two hundred years earlier Pindar had fashioned in *Pythian* 1 an analogy between the hundred-headed Typhos, another giant suppressed beneath Sicily for rebellion against Zeus and his minister Apollo, and the enemies of Pindar’s patron, Hieron. At the very end of the *Georgics* Virgil had described Octavian as a young Jupiter hurling the lightning-bolt and “fashioning a path to Olympus” (*Georg.* 4. 559–66).

When Ovid asks for “Jupiter’s” pardon, which all-powerful ruler does he have in mind? It is a measure of Ovid’s relative lateness in the tradition that no firm confidence on this question is possible.

FURTHER READING

The standard text of Callimachus’ *Hymns* and *Epigrams* is Pfeiffer 1949/1953; the best commentaries on individual hymns are Bulloch 1985 (*Athena*) and Hopkinson 1984 (*Demeter*). Pfeiffer’s text of the *Aitia* and other fragmentary poems (the numeration adopted in this chapter) has, however, in part been superseded as a result of the publication of new papyri. For the *Aitia* see esp. Massimilla 1996, 2010 and Harder 2012; for the *Hecale* Hollis 2009; and for the *Iambi* Kerkhecker 1999 and Acosta-Hughes 2002, though neither is a complete edition. There is a complete bibliography up to 1998 in Lehnus 2000. For critical discussions of Callimachus’ poetry see esp. Cameron 1995 and Fantuzzi-Hunter 2004; Harder 2010 is a helpful introduction to the *Aitia*, and for Hellenistic literature more generally see Gutzwiller 2007. On the Roman reception of Callimachus see esp. Hunter 2006a; Cairns 1979 offers much on the Hellenistic background of Tibullus.

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CHAPTER 11

Gallus: The First Roman Love Elegist

Roy K. Gibson

A New Discovery

Continuing excavations at Qasr Ibrîm – a fortress which in antiquity overlooked the Nile in Lower Nubia – produced another remarkable find at the start of April 2010. Thanks to the generosity of the excavators, Professors Grünfeld and Jagd of the Institut für Altorientalistik at Pforzheim, we are permitted to reproduce here a first English translation of a small extract taken from a total of around 600 lines recovered from the tattered remnants of a papyrus roll. It will be immediately apparent that we have here a fresh batch of elegiacs by the first – and hitherto almost entirely “lost” – Roman elegist Cornelius Gallus (who was also the first Roman governor of Egypt under Augustus). This extract can be added to the mere handful of nine lines found at Qasr Ibrîm in 1978 (and published in 1979), plus the single line preserved as a quotation in a late antique work. The following section is found about one third of the way through an elegy of around 40 lines:

Unwillingly, girl, did I leave your [.....] 15
Unwillingly, I swear [.....] and your father.
But what am I to call you, who fill my days with misery,
To whom Apollo has granted his gifts [.....]
Am I to address you as Delia, Cynthia, or Lycoris?
Or should I call you [.....] Venus [.....]? 20
For [.....] phori[.....]
[.....] Catullus [.....] Lesb[.....]
And I now [.....] in succession after them [.....]
Celebrate you, Lycoris, in my verse [.....]

Look kindly on my undertakings, Catullus, too long silent; 25
 At length take up again the Muse loved in your green youth.
 Our verse, though harsh [.....]

The passage opens with what seems to be the missing link between the comical address of the severed lock of hair to its royal mistress Berenice in Catullus 66 (39: “invita, o regina, tuo de vertice cessi”: “unwillingly, o queen, did I leave your brow”) and the puzzling redeployment of this line in one of the most moving passages of the *Aeneid*, where Aeneas in the Underworld explains to Dido his decision to abandon her (*Aen.* 6.460 “invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi”: “unwillingly, queen, did I leave your shore”). It can now be seen that the more likely target of Vergil’s reference is his friend Gallus and the latter’s address to his mistress at the highly significant moment at which he first assigns her a name. The only difficulty that now remains is to make sense of Gallus’ allusion to Catullus.

At any rate, it is this moment of ‘naming’ his girlfriend, Lycoris, that proves something of a surprise. It has long been understood that Lycoris, Cynthia and Delia are all cult titles of the god of poetry, Apollo, and that there is some significance in the fact that these names are used in turn by (respectively) Gallus, Propertius and Tibullus for their mistresses (Anderson, Parsons, Nisbet 1979, 148; Hollis 2007, 242–3; Keith 2008, 92). But what was entirely unclear – up till now – is that Gallus considered each of these names in turn for his mistress, before apparently discarding the more familiar cult titles Cynthia and Delia in favour of the rather more recondite Lycoris. The implications of these few lines are far-reaching for the reading of Propertius and Tibullus. In this context it is somewhat frustrating that lines 21–2 are incompletely preserved, for it is just possible that the poet named in line 21 is accredited with some involvement in the naming of mistresses (with cult titles?). That poet, somewhat surprisingly, may well be Eu]phori[on, a shadowy Hellenistic poet with whom Gallus is elsewhere associated (Lightfoot 1999, 59–64, Hollis 2007, 230–34). This figure is conventionally associated more with the learned retellings of obscure erotic myth than with “subjective” love elegy, but appears to be put forward here as the first in a series of love poets or even love elegists (including, significantly, also Catullus), in which Gallus claims for himself the final position in succession. This canon is a clear forerunner of – and competitor with – Ovid’s later listings of the four love elegists which include Gallus, Propertius, Tibullus, and end with himself (e.g. *Ars* 3.535–8, *Tr.* 4.10.51–4, 5.1.17–20).

The final lines of the extract offer further food for thought. Lines 25–6 imply that Catullus – long thought to have died in the late 50s B.C. – was still alive (even if inactive) when Gallus was composing his elegies, i.e. at some point during the 40s and early 30s B.C. Gallus clearly looks up to him as some kind of living role model. The final line of the extract alludes to the “roughness” of Gallus’ verse. This is a criticism of Gallus’ verse found famously in Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.93) and has been repeated by every commentator on Gallus since. Does the reputation of Gallus’ verse for ‘harshness’ in fact originate with the elegist himself? If so, some critical rethinking may be necessary, since the context for Gallus’ acknowledgement of his lack of polish may well be an attempt to tease Catullus about the latter’s youthful experiments in verse.

A Forgery

The lines from Gallus discovered on 1st April 2010 and quoted above are of course a forgery (by R. K. Gibson, with some assistance from S. E. Hinds and S. L. James) – and rather unambitious by comparison with the forgery of Aldus Manutius the Younger, who in 1590 passed off his own elegies as those of Gallus. Nevertheless, the primary and secondary literature used to explicate the text of the forgery, and the facts and issues cited or discussed by this literature, are perfectly real.

My forgery has not been designed to waste the reader's time (as such), but rather to try to suggest some of the imaginative possibilities that attend the idea of a substantially rediscovered Gallus. For Gallus is without doubt a highly alluring figure. His rediscovered elegies might be found to provide and inform much of the agenda and programme of later love elegy, in a way that would require us to rewrite our commentaries and standard monographs. (The recovery of Callimachus, similarly, made previous scholarship on Hellenistic poetry somewhat redundant.) Much of Roman love elegy (and the poetry of others such as Vergil) might be reacting in some way to Gallus's achievement, whether through developing his themes, taking up the possibilities he suggested but left unexplored, or rephrasing his words. Is reading (e.g.) Propertius without Gallus like reading the *Aeneid* without knowledge of Homer? One can do it, of course, but the results may be impoverished (or even wrong). A second major part of his allure is that Gallus is surely the missing link between Catullus and Propertius. The majority of Catullus' elegies show closer affinities with the long-established genre of the 'occasional' epigram, with its characteristically short and pointed (and often self-contained) poetic productions. Only a minority, in any case, involve Lesbia. The first collection of Propertius, by contrast, is an artistically dense and deliberately composed poetry book devoted to an affair with a single woman, which displays a relatively coherent set of distinctive attitudes towards love, politics, and society (Gibson 2005, 160–65). The precise contribution of Gallus to this artistic transition is a fascinating question.

If the forgery can convey an inkling of the possibilities here, then it will have done its job. As most readers will know, nine genuine lines of Gallus were recovered from Qasr Ibrīm on 11 March 1978 under the aegis of the Egypt Exploration Society – and published to acclaim in the *Journal of Roman Studies* in 1979 (with authoritative text, context and commentary provided by R. D. Anderson, P. J. Parsons and R. G. M. Nisbet). But those lines are perhaps already over-familiar in some respects to readers of elegy, and also perhaps disappointing in their content – at least to some (Hollis 2007, 251–2) – not to say somewhat problematic in various ways. We shall return to them more fully at the end of this chapter. For the moment I wish to stay with the idea of the allure of Gallus, and show how our extensive knowledge of his life has added to the sense of possibility surrounding this figure. Even if we still cannot say very much for definite about the contents of Gallus' poetry, we can say a very great deal that is certain about the continuing fascination of Gallus.

Arms and the Man: the Life of Gallus

Even without his poetry, we still know more about Gallus from external sources than the rest of the elegists put together. Those sources reveal an action-filled and even glamorous

life packed with resonances and ironies for the genre of Roman love elegy. This is all part of his allure. In what follows I use the findings of Anderson, Parsons and Nisbet 1979, esp. 127–8, 148, 150–1, 154–5; Cairns 2006, 72–7; and Hollis 2007, 218–52, esp. 225–30. The ancient sources which form the basis of many statements made below may be located in their pages.

Cornelius Gallus seems to have been born around the same time as Vergil. Importantly, this makes him twenty-seven years older than Ovid, and around fifteen years older than Propertius (and perhaps Tibullus too). The three surviving elegists, in other words, worked in the shadow of a significantly older and more experienced man and poet. To give a comparable sense of poetic generations one might reach for the example of four Anglophone poets from the 20th century, namely T. S. Eliot (b. 1888), W. H. Auden and Louis MacNeice (both b. 1907) and Ted Hughes (b. 1930). (These all met, knew one another and were published by the first in his role as editor at the publishing house of Faber and Faber.) Another sign that Gallus belonged to a different generation from his successors is the fact that he appears to have pursued a military and political career in the freer (if more violent) times of the civil wars prior to the principate – and with some success (Miller 2004, 74–5). He was also known to such eminent literary figures as Cicero and Asinius Pollio (Cic. *Fam.* 10.32; Hollis 2007, 215–18). Neither of these, however, can compete with the allure of the woman who allegedly lies behind Gallus' mistress "Lycoris". Servius, the late antique commentator on Vergil, tells us in his introduction to *Eclogue* 10 she is none other than Cytheris ("Venus' girl"). This well-known mime actress has the sexless Cicero quite thrilled when she makes an unannounced appearance at a dinner party in 46 B.C. (*Fam.* 9.26). More thrilling, from the viewpoint of the study of Roman love elegy, is the fact that she had formerly been the mistress of Mark Antony. Love elegy is often suspected of harboring or reflecting pro-Antonian sentiments (Griffin 1977; Gibson 2007, 43–69), and Cytheris first appears on the historical scene early in the civil war period scandalizing normal citizens with her behaviour in Antony's retinue (Cic. *Att.* 10.10.5, 10.16.5; *Phil.* 2.58, 2.61; Plut. *Ant.* 9). The later efforts of Propertius and Cynthia in this regard seem half-hearted by comparison. Nevertheless, Cytheris' affair with Antony seems to have ended somewhere around 47 B.C., and it is now that her affair with Gallus – and in their wake the elegies – may start. (The main motivating factor for choosing this date for the affair is the identification of the Caesar in the 1979 Gallus fragments with Julius Caesar, who is addressed as if still alive in close proximity to Lycoris; see Hollis 2007, 243–4 and below).

We have no positive evidence that Gallus' poetic career continued beyond the later 40s or early 30s B.C. Nevertheless, the praise heaped on Gallus by Vergil in the sixth and tenth of his *Eclogues* testifies to the strength and immediacy of the impact of his love elegies for Lycoris. What he did for the rest of the 30s is unknown, but Gallus is next to be encountered on campaign in Egypt just after the battle of Actium. This is perhaps a surprise in view of the anti-militaristic and anti-imperial ideology of much of later Roman elegy, although it increases the parallels with Antony, that other romantic man of action. Yet it is Antony who is Gallus' direct military opponent. And the contribution of Gallus to the victory of Augustus is crucial. In the summary of Cairns 2006, 72–3, Gallus' defeat of Antony at Paraetonium on Egypt's western flank "allowed Octavianus to invade Egypt on its other, eastern, flank. Alexandria fell to Gallus on the first of August 30 B.C., and Gallus' machinations then led to the capture of Cleopatra and her treasure. Gallus' subsequent

appointment as 'Praefectus Aegypti' was therefore a reward for services rendered as well as a demonstration of Octavianus' confidence in his loyalty and military and civic competence." Of that appointment as first equestrian prefect more in a moment. But now it is worth lingering just a second longer over Gallus' moment in the glamorous midday sun of the 'Augustan' era, and the ironies for Roman love elegy of his role in deceiving Cleopatra, as she hides with her treasure in the monument at Alexandria (Plut. *Ant.* 79). For behind the imperious and demanding Cynthia of Propertius can often be glimpsed the spectre of Cleopatra, even if Propertius – while claiming for himself some of the attributes of Antony (e.g. 2.15) – spends most of his time trying to ensure that Cynthia is denied any Cleopatra-like power or agency in his affair with her (cf. Wyke 2002, 171). Somewhat ironically, Gallus does something similar in his own extra-elegiac biography, by tricking the actual queen of Egypt into surrendering the remains of her power to (of all people) the future emperor Augustus.

The award of the position of first prefect of Egypt was a signal honour. In this role Gallus left to posterity a tri-lingual inscription at Philae just north of the Nile's first cataract, which records various victories in the region (CIL iii Suppl. 14147 (5)). The find site of the inscription is itself somewhat significant, as the 1979 Gallus would turn up at another site some 150 miles south of Philae at a fortress (Qasr Ibrîm) that would be occupied by the Romans for perhaps only a few years before 20 B.C. By that time other Roman love elegy had been written and was available, and Gallus' own elegies were now perhaps around twenty years old. The find spot here – near Gallus' own province – is surely testament to his status as 'living legend'. At any rate, the appointed term of Gallus' office in Egypt appears to have been short, and he demitted his role perhaps at the end of 29. His subsequent behaviour in Rome apparently offended Augustus (Cairns 2006, 73–5; Hollis 2007, 228), and the offence, like that of Ovid after him, was personal (Suet. *Aug.* 66.2; cf. *Ov. Am.* 3.9.63; *Tr.* 2.446). Augustus' response was to ban Gallus from his own house and from residence in the provinces. In the aftermath Gallus committed suicide, and the event was commemorated not long after by Propertius (2.34.91–2).

Reconstructing Gallus' Poetry

If the facts and likelihoods of literary history demand that we try to reconstruct the role of Gallus in the development of Roman love elegy, then, as suggested earlier, known events in Gallus' life and career bring a glamour to the man which, if anything, add to the allure of this project of recreating Gallus. But how to go about this reconstruction?

Try this thought experiment: imagine that we possessed all of the elegies of Gallus, but had entirely lost Propertius. What mark would Propertius have left? The most important marks – the intertextual traces so strongly imprinted on Ovid's elegiac output – would be almost entirely invisible to us. In this alternative universe, one resort would be to adopt the somewhat problematic method of understanding similarities between Ovid and the complete elegies of Gallus as evidence of possible adaptations of the lost Propertius at those moments when Propertius is himself alluding to the style, mannerisms or characteristic subject matter of Gallus.

This is in fact precisely what has been attempted by many scholars in the recreation of Gallus, principally by making inferences from similarities among Propertius, Ovid, those

Eclogues of Vergil which focus on Gallus, and Gallus' own surviving ten lines, plus a variety of other sources. The results are well summarised by Keith 2008, 69, from the perspective of detecting traces of Gallus within the text of his immediate successor, Propertius:

The distinctive features that Propertius appropriates from Gallan elegy for his own elegiac programme include a variety of formal diagnostic characteristics such as archaic diction, graecising syntax, polysyllabic pentameter endings, and hyperbaton, in addition to such stylistic features of Gallan poetry as the elaboration of mythological narratives, often highly recondite, and their application to the situation of the poet-love; programmatic development of amatory *topoi* such as *medicina amoris* and *erotodidaxis*; intense engagement with contemporary literary debates in poems addressed to men of letters and / or featuring other authors or characters (c. V. *Buc.* 6 and 10); and a concentrated focus on the figure of the beloved, whether Cynthia or Lycoris, who accordingly assumes a symbolic value as poetic construct.

We will look in more detail at a very select number of these recovered features (and the methodologies for their recovery) below. But is worth pointing out in advance the enormity of the task. In his introduction to *Eclogue* 10, Servius tells us that Gallus wrote four books of *amores* about Cytheris/Lycoris (where *Amores* may be understood to be the title of the work [Cairns 2006, 230–2]). It is perfectly possible, as we shall see, that he wrote other poetry besides. But if we concentrate on the *Amores* alone, and conservatively estimate that each of Gallus' books contained around 600 lines (i.e. less than the average length of an Augustan poetry book), then, with only 10 lines already in the bag, we have c. 99.6% of the text still to reconstruct. With the methodologies at our disposal we can at best hope to recover only likely Gallan topics or perhaps short extracts of (at most) four or five lines bearing putative Gallan vocabulary and mannerisms. We can have very little idea of the shapes of whole poems, much less of entire books (Cairns 2006, 73). Also worth bearing in mind is Ian DuQuesnay's warning, made in the course of a review of one of the most adventurous and influential attempts to reconstruct Gallus (Ross 1975), of "the difficulties of [the] undertaking. These are easily grasped if one compares the picture of, say, Tibullus which emerges from the testimonia [of later authors] with that which emerges from the poems themselves" (DuQuesnay 1978, 276, with further development and comment by Cairns 2006, 104–8).

Recovery of Gallus from lexical, metrical or thematic similarities among the later elegists is one of the most commonly used techniques of reconstruction. A relatively uncontroversial example – because Lycoris is mentioned by name in two instances – is found in the following texts:

sive illam Hesperiiis, sive illam ostendet Eois,
uret et Eoos, uret et Hesperios
(Prop. 2.3.43–4)

Whether he exhibits her to the lands of the West or the East, he will set on fire both East and West.

Gallus et Hesperiiis et Gallus notus Eois,
et sua cum Gallo nota Lycoris erit
(Ov. *Am.* 1.15.29–30)

Gallus will be known by the West and Gallus by the East, and with Gallus will his Lycoris be known.

Vesper et Eoae novere Lycorida terrae
(Ov. *Ars* 3.537)

Evening and Eastern lands know of Lycoris

In the first (and earliest) instance, Propertius is describing an artist's portrait of Cynthia, while in the second and third instances Ovid is celebrating the world-wide fame of Gallus and/or Lycoris. It seems a straightforward inference that the primary object of Ovid's allusion is Gallus, not Propertius, and that Propertius himself is alluding to the same passage of Gallus (Boucher 1966, 98) – in which, presumably, claims were made for the fame which the poet could offer Lycoris. There are very many other examples which are rather more open to discussion or doubt, although there exists no agreed methodology about how or where to draw the line. Nevertheless, for a recent attempt to evolve a consistent methodology, based initially on the surviving ten lines of Gallus, see Cairns 2006, 81–103 (with copious examples).

Eclogues 6 and 10 also provide material for reconstruction, since Gallus makes a conspicuous if enigmatic appearance in the former and is the main subject of the latter. (Indeed, that Vergil should be author of this rich resource is part, once more, of the attraction of Gallus. If it had been Tibullus, we might be less interested.) At any rate, the tenth *Eclogue* is deliberately set up as a tribute to Gallus and his love poetry for Lycoris (10.2–3). Here Gallus is dying from the effects of love in the pastoral landscape of Arcadia, and he makes a plea to Lycoris to return from the Alps and Rhine to his side. If we had not already guessed that Vergil must be making some kind of allusion to the contents of Gallus' elegies here, Servius ups the stakes by informing us at line 46 that “all these verses of Gallus have been taken [*translati*] from his own poems”. Lines 42–51 are particularly worth quoting:

hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori;
hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer aevo.
nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis
tela inter media atque adversos detinet hostis.
tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere tantum)
Alpinas, a, dura, nives et frigora Rheni
me sine sola vides. a, te ne frigora laedant!
a, tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!
ibo et Chalcidico quae sunt mihi condita versu
carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor avena.

Here, Lycoris, are cool fountains, here soft fields, here woodland, here with you I'd be Time's casualty. But now, demented love detains me under arms of callous Mars, amid weapons and opposing foes. You, far from fatherland, (could I but disbelieve it!) gaze – ah, callous – on Alpine snows and frozen Rhine, alone, without me. Ah, may the frosts not injure you! Ah, may the rough ice never cut your tender feet! I'll go and tune to the Sicilian shepherd's oat the songs I put together in Chalcidic verse.

Whether or not we can take Servius at his word, it is certain that similar sentiments and themes turn up in later love elegy, including the idea of being abandoned by one's mistress

who has gone on a journey, the intention to spend one's life with the mistress, the hostility towards the military life, the accusation that one's mistress is *dura*, and a concern with the author's poetics. Particularly intriguing are the parallels with Propertius 1.8, where the elegist fears abandonment by Cynthia as she contemplates going off to Illyria with a praetor, and Propertius – like Gallus – fears for his mistress amidst the frost and snow (1.8.7–8 “tu pedibus teneris positas fulcire pruinas, | tu potes insolitas, Cynthia, ferre nives?”: “Can you tread with your dainty feet the hoar-frost on the ground. Can you endure, Cynthia, the unfamiliar snows?”). The passage – and its parallels with Propertius (Gold 1985–86, 151–2; Keith 2008, 68) – appear to bring us very close to the text of Gallus. Further triangulation using the carving of the mistress' name on trees in lonely places at the end of this extract from Vergil and the same in Propertius 1.18 (esp. 1–4, 19–22) can be used to line up a position in Gallus' original text (Keith 2008, 67–8). And in general spotting lexical or thematic similarities between *Eclogue* 10 and the text of the elegists (particularly Propertius) is one of the most widely used techniques to recover lost Gallus (Hollis 2007, 235–7).

Rather harder to use is the sixth *Eclogue*, which includes a riddling account of the poetic initiation of Gallus (6.64–73). The poet is led up Mt. Helicon by one of the Muses, presented with pipes (previously said to have been the gift of the Muses to Hesiod), and instructed to use them to tell of the foundation of Apollo's grove at Gryneia. This alluring passage has so far resisted complete decoding (Lightfoot 1999, 61–3; Hunter 2006, 21–8), but appears to be telling us that Gallus – in a generic ascent up the mountain of poetry – must now begin writing verse in the aetiological tradition, where the subject is in fact taken (according to Servius on this passage) from the poetry of Euphorion. The latter, as noted earlier, is a very shadowy figure, but appears to have written mythological and aetiological poetry, chiefly in hexameters, but perhaps with a distinctly erotic slant to his versions of the myths. Of course this raises the possibility that Gallus wrote poetry *other* than the love elegies for Lycoris (see below). But, at any rate, Vergil's lines appear once more to reflect a passage in Gallus' own poetry, since in the thirteenth poem of his second book Propertius creates a literary topography for himself and his poetics with substantial similarities to the topography evoked by Vergil above (Keith 2008, 65–7).

In addition to these techniques of micro-reconstruction of features of Gallus' poetry, we can attempt some macro-reconstruction through an attempt to gauge Gallus' role as the missing link between Catullus (and his Greek predecessors) and Propertius (and his Roman successors). The act of reconstruction is given added fascination by the fact that nothing prior to Propertius looks very much like Roman love elegy as we have it. For example, the poetry of the premier Hellenistic elegists, Callimachus and Philetas, probably resembled Roman love elegy relatively little in terms of content, and at most offered a high level of style to which the elegists might aspire (Knox 1993) or – in the words of Richard Hunter in this volume – “the Callimachean poetic voice offered a model which at least suggested what might be possible.” Somewhat more promising – in terms of content – are various Hellenistic elegies which survive only on papyrus and combine erotic mythological narratives with a feature notably absent from the elegiac poetry of Callimachus, namely ‘personal’ frames. These poems (e.g. P. Oxy. 2885 fr. 1.1–20, 21–45) are, in the words of Butrica 1996, 315, “in some sense subjective, in that the mythological content could be exploited for some purpose that is, within the fiction of

the poem, of vital interest to the author's persona." Surviving Roman love elegy displays some poems of similar character (e.g. Prop. 1.20, 3.11, 3.15, 3.19; Tib. 2.3; Ov. *Am.* 3.6, 3.10), while in Catullus we can point to the powerful elegy (68) in which the marriage of Protesilaus and Laodamia is set alongside the story of Catullus' own affair (Lyne 1980, 52–60; Feeney 1992). However, erotic mythological narratives with personal frames are not a central feature of the elegists' collections, and one cannot easily imagine most of their poems growing directly out of such Hellenistic predecessors (Butrica 1996; Lightfoot 1999, 71–5). So it is here that we discern the possible shape of Gallus. That is to say, we may attribute to the *Amores* a series of personally-inflected mythological narratives (reflecting something of the style of Euphorion's hexameters?), where the personal element or frame begins to grow larger than in Catullus and the Hellenistic elegists.

This inference coheres with another piece of information which comes our way from another source, namely the preface to Parthenius' *Sufferings in Love*:

Thinking, Cornelius Gallus, that the collection of sufferings in love was very appropriate to you, I have selected them and sent them to you in a brief as form as possible. ... You ... will be able to render the most suitable of them into hexameters and elegiacs.

It was long thought that Parthenius was responsible for introducing Callimachus himself to Italy and above all to the poets of Catullus' generation, although it now appears more likely that his was a more modest contribution, viz. extending the influence of the recondite Euphorion in this generation and beyond, including to Gallus (Lightfoot 1999, 50–75). His own poetry certainly appears to have been of the personally-inflected mythological kind (Lightfoot 1999, 23–50). At any rate, here in the introduction to his prose summary of various erotic myths, Parthenius may be discovered offering them to Gallus for turning into poetry, whether elegiacs or hexameters (see further below on the hexameters).

As for epigram, this genre of short, pointed poems displays substantial similarities to love elegy in terms of content and style. One practitioner, Meleager (2nd–1st B.C.) – whose influence is acknowledged in the opening lines of the very first poem of Propertius (cf. *AP* 12.101) – was famous both as the editor of a work known as the *Garland* (a collection of artistically arranged epigrams by poets of the preceding two centuries) and as the author himself of over 130 surviving epigrams, mostly erotic in theme. But for all the similarities to Greek epigram, surviving Roman love elegy displays rather greater poetic ambition, exemplified by its gathering of poems often four times the length of epigram into unified collections devoted to one mistress. Meleager, it is true, does write series of poems devoted to mistresses such as Heliodora and Zenophila, but these lack sustained development or the appearance of a narrative. Romans too wrote epigram, of course, and the most significant practitioner here is Catullus. His elegiac achievement comprises four or five “long” pieces (poems 65–8) and nearly fifty shorter pieces, mostly between six and twelve lines long (poems 69–116). In a manner that clearly anticipates love elegy, Catullus compiled a series of poems – more sustained than any written by a Greek epigrammatist and with every appearance of a basic narrative to the affair – devoted to one mistress who is identified by a pseudonym (albeit that many of his most powerful love poems are found in the first, non-elegiac section of his

collection). Nevertheless, as hinted at the beginning of this chapter, neither Lesbia nor love dominates Catullus' collection, at least not in the way that Cynthia and the life of love dominate the first three books of Propertius. Furthermore Catullus' poems, for all their mutually deepening effect on one another, are (arguably) not gathered into books which form part of their meaning in the manner so clearly adopted by Propertius. (For a more detailed investigation into the relationship between Catullus and love elegy, see Wray in this volume.)

Here we may be tempted to discern the shape of Gallus staring at us in negative outline from the shape created by the surrounding jigsaw pieces on the board. First, we can guess that the possibilities of the poetry book were explored by Gallus more fully than in the work of any previous poet of love. Secondly, we may conjecture that his poetry was both poetologically ambitious and allotted a key and unifying role to his mistress Lycoris. On first sight, the latter conclusion is a little hard to square with an earlier one. How can Gallus' poetry have been both a vehicle for the retelling of personally-inflected erotic myth in the style of Euphorion and one unified by a kind of Cynthia-like focus on an a long-standing affair with a single woman? One solution is to observe, with Lightfoot 1999, 64, that "nothing requires that [Lycoris] had anything to do with *all* Gallus' Euphorionic poetry". Hollis 2007, 226 adds that Gallus' narrative-Euphorionic poetry might well have been in hexameters (like the vast bulk of Euphorion, so far as we know) and established Gallus' reputation before he started on elegy. A second solution is to conjecture a kind of evolution across the four books of Gallus' *Amores*, so that the earlier books are more dominated by poems of mythological narrative (like Propertius 3.15), while the later poems look increasingly like the opening poems of Propertius' first book. (Significantly, the four books of Propertius appear to show a reverse image of this conjectured pattern of development, most obviously in Propertius Book 4, which is dominated by mythological narration.)

The final method for reconstructing Gallus' text is also the most clearly controversial. A "Gallus" appears as an intimate addressee or character in five poems of the first book of Propertius (1.5, 1.10, 1.13, 1.20, and 1.21). If this Gallus were the elegist, this raises the distinct possibility that poems addressed to him reflect the style, phraseology or content of his poetry, after the manner of *Eclogue* 6 and 10. This approach has much to recommend it, above all in the case of poem 1.20, where Propertius devotes 36 lines of this 52-line poem to a retelling of the myth of the rape of Hylas by nymphs, and surrounds it with a frame of 14 and then 2 lines explaining the relevance of the myth to Gallus' own life. As hinted earlier, it is a reasonable conjecture that a proportion of Gallus' own poetry looked not unlike this. (For a reading of the poem for its Gallan features, see Cairns 2006, 219–49; Keith 2008, 124–26.) These poems featuring "Gallus" thus hold out the possibility of the recovery of features, stylistics and poetics found in the elegies of Cornelius Gallus (Cairns 2006, 104–20), as well as allowing us to read them as a record of Propertius' dialogue with and response to his great predecessor (Keith 2008, 119–27).

However, quite aside from the inherent difficulty of the act of reconstruction, one minor and one major obstacle must be overcome before such riches can be accessed. First, Propertius was evidently quite comfortable with the idea of using the name Gallus to refer to completely different people. For the very next poem after 1.20 features a Gallus – kinsman of Propertius (cf. 1.22) – who evidently died during the siege of

Perugia in 41–40 B.C. These cannot be the same person; yet Propertius makes no formal effort to distinguish their names. There is then no absolute guarantee that the possible Cornelius Gallus of 1.20 is to be identified with the Gallus of 1.5, 1.10, and 1.13; although the poems can be read with some success as a series with possible links to Cornelius Gallus (Miller 2004, 77–93). It is hard to resist the conclusion that Propertius is playing a game with his reader – a game whose moves we can still discern but whose meaning is now lost. The major obstacle, however, is provided by Propertius’ assertion in poem 1.5 that “nec tibi nobilitas poterit succurrere amanti: / nescit Amor priscis cedere imaginibus” (23–4, “And your *nobilitas* will not help you in love either: Love scorns to defer to ancestral portraits”). In this context *nobilitas* – allied to *imagines* – has a precise meaning: that Gallus is a descendant of consuls and possesses images of his ennobled ancestors. Cornelius Gallus was not a descendant of consuls, so there seems every reason *not* to identify the addressee of 1.5 with the elegist. Attempts have been made to argue that *nobilitas* need not be understood literally here (Cairns 2006, 78–9; cf. Miller 2004, 81–3); but to avoid taking *nobilitas* in its primary sense requires an extraordinary amount of negative mental effort from the reader. Nevertheless, support for seeing Cornelius Gallus here is undeniably growing.

Ten Lines

We come at last to Gallus’ uncontested remains. Prior to the discovery of nine new lines from Gallus at Qasr Ibrim, we had precisely one line from the poet to work with, namely a pentameter quoted in the early sixth-century A.D. in a work on fountains and rivers as found in various poets (Vibius Sequester *De Fluminibus* 77):

uno tellures dividit amne duas

[the Hypanis] divides two lands with its single stream

This gave critics little to go on, other than to observe that the artistry of the word patterning betrays little of Gallus’ reputation for “harshness”. The lines which turned up in Egypt are an entirely different matter, and – initially at least – created very great excitement. (They are practically certified as Gallan through the fortuitous appearance of the name Lycoris in the first line.) I print here a slightly simplified version of the most recent text and translation (Hollis 2007, 224). However I preserve the gaps between the four unequal sections visible in the original text:

tristia nequit[ia fact]a, Lycori, tua. 1

Fata mihi, Caesar, tum erunt mea dulcia quom tu
maxima Romanae pars eri<s> historiae
postque tuum reditum multorum templa deorum
fixa legam spolieis deivitoria tueis. 5

.....] tandem fecerunt c[ar]mina Musae
quae possem domina deicere digna mea.

.....]. atur idem tibi, non ego, Visce,
 ..] I . Kato, iudice te vereor.

]... [].
]... []. Tyria

10

[?made] sad, Lycoris, by your wantonness

My fate, Caesar, will be sweet to me at that time when you become the greatest part of Roman History, and when, after your return, I survey the temples of many gods, richer for being fixed with your spoils.

... Finally the Muses have made [?these] poems [?for me] that I could call worthy of my mistress. [?And if she tells] you the same, I do not, Viscus, I do not Cato, fear ... with you as judge.

... Tyrian ...

What exactly do we have here? The quoted lines are found on a single continuous sheet of papyrus. However after the first, fifth and ninth lines are found curious marks resembling the letter ‘h’ (Anderson, Parsons and Nisbet 1979, 129–30, 138 with plates IV and V) which serve to introduce strong interlinear breaks at these points (reflected in the line spacing above). Do we have the remains of a single elegy, an amoebean exchange between two competing speakers, the remains of up to four short epigrams (with evident thematic connections between them, e.g. between lines 1 and 6–7), or excerpted quotations from one or more longer elegies? Each of these positions has its supporters (Hollis 2007, 242, 250–1; also Miller, 2004, 76–83; Cairns 2006, 407–28). The “epigram” hypothesis raises the possibility that, despite the appearance of the name Lycoris, these lines might not even come from Gallus’ putative four-book *Amores*, but from a hitherto unknown collection of epigrams (see Hollis 2007, 250–1 for such works as parallel to an author’s “main” corpus, as apparently in the case of Ovid).

Given the size of the sample of Gallus’ verses before us one may legitimately remain agnostic about such questions – and still ask what these lines tell us about Gallus and his poetry. First of all, these lines look not unlike the poetry of Propertius, with their mixture of complaints about ill treatment from one’s mistress (1), allusion to the political achievements of Caesar (2–5) and explicit comment on the poetry one has written for the mistress and its critical reception (6–9). Even more arrestingly, Gallus deploys the language of “alienation” and misbehaviour that would become standard in his elegiac successors but is not observed in predecessors such as Catullus. These terms include *nequitia* (1) and *domina* (7). However, where devotion to the figure of Cynthia allows Propertius to express his alienation from the values and politics of his own day – through his refusal to be a proper and responsible citizen in the immediate aftermath of the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra (Gibson 2005, 162–65) – it is less clear how effectively Lycoris could have done the same for Gallus. Quite apart from the fact that the *nequitia* here belongs to Lycoris (and not the elegist, as at Ov. *Am.* 2.1.2), critics rely on – one might almost say “need” – the figure of Augustus to give terms

like this force when used by Propertius or Ovid. For it is only in the context of Augustus' one-man rule and (ultimately) his ideology of moral reform that such terms appear to gain their power. Take Augustus out of the equation and imagine a Roman love elegy in the middle 40s B.C., perhaps just prior to the assassination of Julius Caesar, and it becomes much less clear what devotion to an 'unworthy' woman might be used to express alienation from. A political scene dominated by Julius Caesar (and Antony himself) appears to provide much less to rebel against than does the more obviously oppositional figure of Augustus. Indeed lines 2–5 of the Gallus fragment seem to evince a positive attitude towards Julius Caesar that is consonant with the poet's later military service under Augustus.

It is perhaps worth focusing for a moment longer here on Gallus' mistress and raising the broader question of the relationship between the Lycoris of Gallus' poetry and the Cytheris of history. The scholarly consensus is that while some historical woman may lie behind Cynthia or Delia (but hardly Corinna), the connection with history hardly matters since the elegiac woman is largely a freighter for the poetological and ideological baggage of the elegist. Hence it will seem likely that Lycoris too will have been largely a symbolic figure in Gallus' poetry. However, if we glance back towards Catullus, and focus on another larger-than-life figure, namely the Clodia Metelli who in all likelihood lies behind the Lesbia of his poetry, then we may come to a different conclusion: that Lycoris will have been identifiable as Cytheris, with less focus on her ability to embody the poetics and politics of the writer.

To return to the new Gallus lines, they yield (somewhat disappointingly) no examples of recondite mythological allusion or narration, such as the gaps in the elegiac jigsaw puzzle had led us to expect. But given that we are dealing with such a small sample of lines, this is hardly surprising. Altogether more puzzling, in a sense, is the fact that these lines appear to display a strong series of intertextual links with later Roman elegy. Among the most obvious parallels are

ite et Romanae consulite historiae!
Mars pater, et sacrae fatalia lumina Vestae,
ante meos obitus sit precor illa dies,
qua videam spoliis oneratos Caesaris axes ...
(Prop. 3.4.10–13)

Away, and serve Rome's history well! Father Mars, and fires of inviolate Vesta pregnant with destiny, let that day come before my death, I pray, the day on which I see Caesar's chariot laden with spoil ...

te mihi materiem felicem in carmina praebe –
provenient causa carmina digna sua.
(Ov. *Am.* 1.3.19–20)

Give me yourself as happy matter for my songs – and my songs will come forth worthy of their cause.

In the first extract Propertius wishes Augustus Caesar well on his Eastern expedition, anticipating that he will become part of Roman *historia*, and looks forward to the day when he will see a triumph where chariots are laden with spoil taken from the enemy.

Similar here of course are lines 2–5 of the Gallus fragment, where, if the addressee is Julius Caesar, then the expedition to which allusion is made is almost certainly another Eastern expedition (against Parthia). And here too Gallus talks of *historia* and his anticipation of seeing the spoils of war. As for the Ovidian passage, here in the *Amores* the poet promises his unnamed mistress that poems “worthy of their cause” will result from their affair. This can be read as a typically Ovidian dramatic recasting of the more abstract pronouncement of Gallus that he is at last writing such poetry (where the emotional *domina* of Gallus is deliberately replaced with Ovid’s more self-serving *causa*).

A host of further possible references by the later elegists to the new Gallus fragment have been uncovered by a host of critics working since 1979 on the topic. In the wake of this scholarship, Cairns 2006, 83 can talk of the new Gallus papyrus permitting “recognition of the massive impact upon later Roman poetry of certain Gallan terms” (documented in his subsequent chapters). In which case, one wonders, what would the discovery of an entire book of Gallus do to the field? It is this thought of the enormity of what we have lost that may legitimately haunt critical work on elegy – and that in turn explains the extraordinary amount of labour which has been directed at unlocking the intertexts and implications of a mere nine incomplete lines. Of course, one may label such intertextual work as overly positivistic, and (e.g.) doubt whether Gallus line 3 lies behind five out of seven Propertian instances of the term *historia*. Yet the methodology used by (e.g.) Cairns to recover these *historia* intertexts (2006, 83–91) is no more than a souped-up version of the highly refined and elaborate intertextual techniques used by Augustan poetry critics of every stripe and persuasion from the 1970s to the present day. If we cannot stomach the “massive impact” of nine lines of Gallus on later poetry, then is it time to start doubting the legitimacy of the lengths to which we have gone in pursuing the whole intertextuality project? Or are these lines of some potency within Gallus’ corpus – the equivalent of finding a small fragment of Callimachus’ *Aetia* prologue rather than part of some aetiological narration later in the work?

In the end, we just do not know. But the fascination – as with everything to do with Gallus – remains.

FURTHER READING

Readers new to Gallus should start with the original publication of the new Gallus fragment by Anderson, Parsons and Nisbet 1979, with plates of the papyrus and detailed commentary on the text and context of the poet. The invaluable collection of relevant material on Gallus there assembled is supplemented by the new commentary of Hollis 2007, 219–52, who also provides an update on the massive bibliography generated by the new Gallus and the status of the debate on a variety of questions associated with it. (Also worth consulting is the commentary by Courtney 1993, 259–70.) The leading exponents of positivistic (and controversial) attempts to reconstruct the contents and character of Gallus from a variety of contemporary and later sources are Boucher 1966, 69–101; Ross 1975; and Cairns 2006, 70–249 (who also provides very extensive bibliographical information on earlier reconstructions). Information on Gallus’ Hellenistic and late Republican predecessors is usefully condensed by Lightfoot 1999, 1–76. Detailed investigations of the life and career of Gallus are provided by Boucher 1966, 5–65 and Manzoni 1995. Gallus’ trilingual

inscription at Philae is now the object of a full-length study by Hoffmann, Minas-Nerpel and Pfeiffer 2009. On Lycoris/Volumnia Cytheris, see Keith 2011.

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PART IV

Stylistics and Discourse

CHAPTER 12

Love's Tropes and Figures

Duncan F. Kennedy

Propertius opens his collection with the dramatic statement that Cynthia “captured” or “hunted” him down (*cepit*, 1.1.1) with her eyes. He claims that this “madness” (*furor*, 1.1.7) has not abated for a year, and he appeals to his friends to “seek out remedies for his mad heart” (“quaerite non sani pectoris auxilia”, 1.1.26); “bravely” he says “shall I suffer iron and cruel flames” (“fortiter et ferrum saevos patiemur et ignis”, 1.1.27), his language hovering between suggestions of cauterization of wounds and the torture applied to slaves, “if only I were to have the freedom to utter what my anger wills” (“sit modo libertas quae velit ira loqui”, 1.1.28). Such tropes, particularly the so-called “warfare of love” (*militia amoris*) and “slavery of love” (*servitium amoris*), have been the focus of considerable attention on the part of scholars of Roman elegy, and have served to organize much of their thinking on social, political and gender issues associated with elegy, as many items in the suggestions for further reading at the end of this chapter explore. This focus is symptomatic of something distinctive about Roman elegy, but it should make us pause for thought. The metaphorical traffic, after all, can go both ways. If love can be described in terms applicable to war, then war can no less be eroticized. Camilla in Virgil’s *Aeneid* provides a striking instance. In the action that leads up to her death, Virgil focuses in on her *desire* for the spoils of battle as she targets the lavish costume of the Trojan priest Chloereus (*Aen.*11.778–82; all translations in this chapter are my own):

hunc [sc. Chlorea] virgo, sive ut templis praefigeret arma
Troia, captivo sive ut se ferret in auro
venatrix, unum ex omni certamine pugnae
caeca sequebatur totumque incauta per agmen
femineo praedae et spoliolum ardebat *amore*.

Chloëus alone in all the contest of the battle the maiden was blindly pursuing, either that she might hang Trojan weapons on the gates of temples or flaunt herself in captured gold when she went hunting, and recklessly through the whole of the armed ranks was burning with a woman's *love* of booty and spoils.

Camilla's "love" of booty is characterized by "burning" (*ardebat*, 782), and a "blindness" (cf. *caeca*, 781) marks the "pursuit" (cf. *sequebatur*, 781) of the object of her desire. This equation of love and war is no less an insistent feature of the *Aeneid* than it is of elegy. As Ellen Oliensis has so piquantly put it (1997, 308): "Martial and marital wounds are consanguineous throughout the epic. This convergence is most fully realised in the ghastly 'penetration' of the only female fighter of the epic; the spear that pierces Camilla's nipple and drinks her blood ('sub exsertam donec perlata papillam/haesit virgineumque alte bibit acta cruorem,' *Aen.* 11.803–4) figures a grotesquely accelerated sexual maturation, from virgin to bride to nursing mother." But on the whole, critics of epic are not so ready to organize their thoughts around a "trope" of *amor militiae* or see it as generically crucial in the way that critics of elegy fixate on *militia amoris* and *servitium amoris*.

Love and war, love and slavery are not identical, but in presenting them in shared terms, we are invited to view aggression, domination and submission as aspects of the dynamics of erotic as much as of martial activity, and vice versa, the loss of freedom to say what you want is the mark of the lover no less than of the captive and the slave. In this chapter, I shall examine this figurative interplay with the help of Ovid, not only a bravura manipulator of these tropes, but also one of the most acute observers of their discursive deployment. First, a caveat. In his erotodidactic works, he sets himself up as the *praeceptor Amoris* (*Ars* 1.17), the teacher of Love (Cupid, the embodiment of desire), and we would do well to pay attention to his self-appointed title. *prae-cipere*, to teach, is a compound of *capere*, to capture: the *praeceptor Amoris* thus sets himself up to preempt the effect that love can have on the lover, as in Propertius 1.1. Such victims are described as "taken in" (*de-cipere*, another compound based on *capere*) when he comes to "cure" them in the *Remedia amoris* (41–2):

ad mea, *decepti* iuvenes, *praecepta* venite,
quos suus ex omni parte fefellit amor.

come to my *precepts*, *deceived* youths, whose passion has failed them in every respect.

The play on "decepti" and "praecepta" could be a sly acknowledgement on Ovid's part that it is through his teaching, as much as through the actions of *amor*, as he suggests in 42, they have been disappointed (*fefellit*). It is left unclear whether the circle formed by *praecipere/capere/decipere* is a virtuous or a vicious one; but clear that for Ovid, the relationship of teacher and pupil comes no less within the ambit of love's figures and tropes than that between lover and beloved, in particular in the fact that you forfeit the freedom you fancy you have to say just what you want.

In telling his male student where to find girls, the *praeceptor* suggests that "you should particularly do your *hunting* in the amphitheatre; these places are more fertile for your desire" ("sed tu praecipue curvis *venare* theatris;/haec loca sunt voto fertiliora tuo," *Ars*

1.89–90). Ovid has asked us to think about the lover's desire (*votum*, *Ars* 1.90) and the setting prompts an important reflection on what motivates behaviour there (*Ars* 1.91–2):

illic invenies quod ames, quod ludere possis,
quodque semel tangas, quodque tenere velis.

The amphitheatre offers a broad range of possibilities for the male lover to satisfy his desire, which is presented as a complex phenomenon: “there,” he says, “you will find what you may love, what you may play with, both what you may touch once, and what you may wish to keep.” He may not simply be looking for love (*quod ames*), but for play (*quod ludere possis*), for something one-off (*quod ... semel tangas*) or for something he may want to hang on to (“quod ... tenere velis”). The neuter *quod* may humorously refer to the female of the species, but its range of reference could suggest that, whilst she is its focus, the *object* of the lover's desire is structured by a sense of possibilities – love and sex, yes, but also the potentiality for “play” suggested by the verb *ludere*, and the shifting temporal range within which desire may look to achieve satisfaction.

The passage that follows draws on a complex interplay of similarities and differences to explore this phenomenon. Ovid offers a cheeky aetiological story of how the theatre took on this role through the rape of the Sabine women orchestrated by Romulus (*Ars* 1.101–34), remarking that it was “from that time-honoured custom that theatres remain to this day places of *ambush* for the good-looking” (“scilicet ex illo sollemni more theatra/nunc quoque formosis *insidiosa* manent,” *Ars* 1.133–4). He presents the Rome of the distant past as a relatively unsophisticated place: the theatre of those days was an impromptu construction of earth and grass (107) not the elaborate modern equivalent of marble with canvas awnings to keep off the sun (103). But although the differences between the ancient Roman male and his modern equivalent are there for all to see (the straggling hair shaded by a wreath of whatever leaves were to hand [108], the artless applause [113]), the similarities are no less apparent. The Romulean male turns around to eye up the female talent sitting behind him in the upper tiers of the theatre and pick out the one he wants (109–10) just as, we learn from the elegies of Ovid (*Am.* 2.7.3–4) and Propertius (4.8.77), his modern counterpart does. When Romulus gives the signal, the behaviour of these men and the reaction of the Sabine women are explored in a couple of similes (115–19):

protinus exiliunt animum clamore fatentes
virginibus cupidas iniciuntque manus.
ut fugiunt aquilas, timidissima turba, columbae
utque fugit visos agna novella lupos,
sic illae timuere viros sine lege ruentes ...

Straightaway they jump up, and, disclosing their intentions with a shout, lay their lusting hands on the maidens. As doves, that most timid throng, fly from eagles, and as the young lamb flies from the wolves it has seen, so they were in terror at the men indiscriminately rushing upon them ...

By contrast with Ovid's advice to today's would-be lover to pick out the girl to whom he can deliver the chat-up line “you alone are pleasing to me” (“elige cui dicas ‘tu mihi sola places’”, *Ars* 1.42), these early Roman men simply announce themselves with a shout

counterparts. They too are now desiring subjects, rushing to the amphitheatre, there to find what they may love, what they can play with, what they may touch but once and what they may wish to hang on to.

Desire is expressed not just in physical terms as love-making, but with the complex of behaviour Ovid associates with the verb *ludere*, and the dynamics of desire are worked out over time. In *Amores* 1.5, the lover's memorable sexual encounter with Corinna includes an episode of violence that seems, in the description of the excited lover at any rate, collusive, and is presented in language that suggests the capture of a city under siege (*Am.* 1.5.13–16):

deripui tunicam; nec multum rara nocebat,
pugnabat tunica sed tamen illa tegi,
cumque ita pugnaret tamquam quae vincere nollet,
victa est non aegre proditione sua.

I ripped off her tunic; thin as it was, it wasn't much in the way, but she nonetheless was fighting to be covered by it, and since she was fighting in such a way as to suggest one unwilling to be victor, she was overcome with no difficulty by her own betrayal.

When is fighting just “fighting”? When is the verb *pugnare* just, dismissively, a “figure of speech”? Corinna's “surrender” to her lover's “advances” seems not unwilling; her “self-betrayal” does not seem to cause her any pain or distress (*non aegre*, 16). Perhaps she is the sophisticated modern woman Ovid delineated in the *Ars amatoria*. But how do you tell? You only have the lover's *word* for it. *vis*, the noun commonly used in elegy of the exercise of physical (and usually masculine) strength to achieve sexual satisfaction (and sometimes translated as “rape”), happens also to be the second person singular of the verb (*volo, velle, volui*) used to signify sexual willingness. Ovid offers a subversive commentary on this in the *Ars amatoria* by a subtle conjugation of the verb (*Ars* 1.663–6):

quis sapiens blandis non misceat oscula verbis?
illa licet non det, non data sume tamen.
pugnabit primo fortassis, et “improbe” dicet;
pugnando vinci se tamen illa *volet*.

Who with any sense would not mix kisses with alluring words? Though she may not give them, take the kisses not given anyway. Perhaps she will fight back at first, and call you “wicked”; in fighting nonetheless she'll *be willing* herself overcome.

How far should the lover go in overcoming his girl's “reluctance”, her “fighting back”? Ovid at first urges restraint (*Ars* 1.667–8):

tantum, ne noceant teneris male rapta labellis,
neve queri possit dura fuisse, cave.

Only let not the kisses, crudely snatched, hurt her tender lips, and take care that she cannot complain that they were hard.

However, the object of the exercise is to get what you want, and this is not the moment for faint-heartedness dressed up as a sense of propriety (*Ars* 1.669–74):

oscula qui sumpsit, si non et cetera sumit,
 haec quoque, quae data sunt, perdere dignus erit.
 quantum defuerat pleno post oscula voto?
 ei mihi, rusticitas, non pudor ille fuit.
 vim licet appelles: grata est *vis* ista puellis;
 quod iuvat, invitae saepe dedisse *volunt*.

Whoever has taken kisses, if he has not taken the rest as well, he'll deserve to lose also what's been given. After kisses, how far short are you from getting all you want? Ouch, that's gawkiness, not a sense of shame. Call it "violence" if you wish, but that act of *will* is pleasing to girls; often unwilling they are *willing* to have granted what's pleasing.

Words can hurt too. The self-consoling lover may represent to himself his failure to get what he wants (note the recurrence from *Ars* 1.90 of that word for desire, *votum*, in 671) as *pudor*, "a sense of shame" (672), but Ovid has a less comfortable word with which to describe it, *rusticitas*, "gawkiness" (a wounding counterbalance to the description of the modern woman as *cultissima* in *Ars* 1.97), which he prefaces with an exclamation of pain (*ei mihi*). Both *pudor* and *rusticitas* can be imagined as enclosed within quotation marks to suggest the different perspectives they offer. And so with *vis*: it depends what you call it. To retain the word play, I have translated *vis* on its second occurrence in 673 as "an act of will" to suggest the force of erotic desire. The issue of definition is part of the dynamic of sexual interaction for everyone involved: how do you characterize desire? But there is a temporal aspect to this dynamic in the question of definition as well, as Ovid suggests in his use of the perfect infinitive after the verb "to be willing": what they are unwilling (sc. to grant, *dare*), they are willing *to have granted* (*dedisse*). *quod iuvat* ("what's pleasing", 674) is ambiguous in its reference: "pleasing" to him, to her, to both? Ovid's compressed wording points to the complicated character of the human will, never more so than in sexual desire, as he goes on to argue (*Ars* 1.675–8):

quaecumque est Veneris subita violata rapina,
 gaudet, et improbitas muneris instar habet.
 at quae, cum posset cogi, non tacta recessit,
 ut simulet vultu gaudia, tristis erit.

Any girl who has been overpowered by the shock and awe of passion delights in it, and the "wickedness" comes to look like a service rendered; but the girl who, when she could be compelled, escaped untouched, though she may look like she's happy, will be sad.

For a modern culture schooled to think that in matters of sex "no" means "no", the notion that *vis* could suggest that "you are willing" after all (when you have had a moment to realize it) can come as a rude shock. Ovid has presented the girl as greeting the aggressive advances of the lover with the vocative *improbe* (665) and this characterization of the lover's behaviour is maintained in the noun *improbitas* (676), which I have translated within quotation marks to indicate that it can represent not necessarily Ovid's perspective but contain the traces of the girl's use of the vocative, her troping at that earlier moment of the lover's behaviour. In the wake of the action, one trope is succeeded by another: that erstwhile "wickedness" is now not simply a "service

rendered” but “*like* a service rendered” (“*muneris instar*”, 676): this judgement has superseded the other – but is it too marked by provisionality, the possibility that it will be superseded in turn? What you call it (whatever “it” is), and what you think it *is* (and will you change your mind?) make words important weapons in the battle of the sexes; *vis* (“violence”/“rape”, as “you will”) can be symbolic as well as physical.

This temporal aspect of erotic tropes reflects their citational and situational quality, and for Ovid renders attempts to make a particular trope definitive, to fully comprehend a situation and to make it stick, always open to qualification and revision, as the following couplet dramatizes. For the girl who emerges from such an encounter untouched, though she presents a look (*simulet vultu*, 678) of happiness, that does not encompass her complete feelings on the matter – if you trust Ovid (but are we being taken in? Should we take his word for it?). The verb *simulare* is often translated as “pretend”, which suggests a stark contrast between appearance and reality (she pretends to be happy but in truth she is sad). However, the wording of the couplet can be analysed and translated in such a way as to suggest something altogether more conflicted. *simulare* is associated with the adverb *simul* (“in the company of” or “at the same time”) and the adjective *similis* (“like”). Although she seeks to make “like” she is happy, to make happiness “present” (to herself, perhaps, as well as to the world), another troping of her situation, as sad, is making its presence uncomfortably felt. Which will prevail? That depends, and will continue to depend, on what she thinks she wanted, and her mind is not yet made up on this, and may never be. Whenever the question of what she wanted comes back to her, the issue of presence and absence will continue to pull her this way and that. Socrates, in dialogue with Agathon in Plato’s *Symposium* (200e), asserts that desire in every case is desire for something that is inaccessible and absent, and modern psychoanalytical discourses would have us believe that desire and language are inextricably intertwined. Ovid has more to say on this.

Just a few lines earlier in *Ars amatoria* 1, Ovid has raised the question of chat-up lines his pupil is to use as the drinking-party ends and the guests are dispersing. “Let not your eloquence be subject to any rules of mine,” he suggests; “only bring it about that you desire, and of your own accord you will be fluent” (*Ars* 1.609–10):

non tua sub nostras veniat facundia leges;
fac tantum cupias, sponte disertus eris.

Ovid plays on *facundia*, “verbal fluency”, and *fac ... cupias*, “bring it about that”, “make that you desire”. If the desire is there, words will come with no problem. He goes on to explain the significance of his use of *fac* and its connection with fluency (*Ars* 1.611–12):

est tibi agendus amans imitandaque vulnera verbis;
haec tibi quaeratur qualibet arte fides.

You must play the role of the lover and imitate the wounds in your words; let this credibility be sought by you by whatever means you please.

To be seen as the lover – to win credibility as such – you must play the role (*agere*, cf. *OLD* s.v. §25) of the lover as if on the stage, with your script, as it were, love’s figures

and tropes; pronouncing yourself “wounded” by love is as good a place to start as any (it can “play” on her sympathies). To take on the identity of lover, you must become, yes, a facsimile, and make yourself the same (cf. *idem*, the source of the term “identity”) as a lover: Ovid’s term for this is *simulator*, the noun from the verb *simulare*, “one who is like”, “one who summons up the presence of”, the role he is playing. The aim is to create an effect of *fides*, trust or credibility: in the eyes of the object of your desire, the simulation must be convincing.

There are dangers in this. You yourself are not immune from the persuasiveness of your role-playing, and you may end up convincing not only the world but yourself that you are what you say you are (*Ars* 1.615–16):

saepe tamen vere coepit simulator amare;
saepe, quod incipiens finxerat esse, fuit.

Often he who simulates begins to love in truth; often he has become what at the outset
he had fashioned himself to be.

The would-be lover may find himself internalizing the trope and so come to embody the thing he has been imitating – a sense of difference is abolished, and the trope becomes his identity. The “wounds” imitated in words may no longer be part of an *illusion* and begin to hurt, as they so visibly hurt the suffering lover in the elegies of Propertius and Tibullus. Ovid warns the lover not to fall victim to self-*delusion*, the capacity of the action encompassed by *ludere* to rebound on one’s self. The girl may see through the play-acting, but Ovid counsels *collusion*, exhorting her play along with it (*Ars* 1.617–18):

quo magis, o, faciles imitantibus este, puellae:
fiet amor verus, qui modo falsus erat.

All the more then, girls, be amenable to those playing the role: that passion will become
true, which lately was assumed.

In a further twist on *fac*- words, girls are asked to play their part in this in turn by making themselves willing partners (*faciles*, 617) to those whom they have recognized to be “representing themselves” (*imitantibus*, 617) as the wounded lover; in the passage of time, the *simulator* may come to internalize those tropes, and the passion which had started out as an imposture will come to attract (though for how long Ovid does not of course specify) the description “true”. *falsus* (618) itself is of wavering identity. It may be an adjective (“false”), say from the indignant perspective of the girl who has just detected the imposture, but could be, say from the amenable perspective of the girl who has now decided she wants to play along in an imposture of her own, the perfect passive participle of the verb *fallere* (“impersonated”). For Ovid, identities in love are, from every perspective, *assumed*.

This is, emphatically, not to deny that there are phenomena we readily and rightly call *love*, *war*, *slavery*, and so on, but it does suggest that what these phenomena *are*, their definition (the boundaries, *fines*, that mark one off from another), is not necessarily either synchronically clear or diachronically final. When is fighting just “fighting”? When does *vis* mean *rape*? When does your professed *amor* become *verus*? Ovid’s exposition of

the slipperiness of language touches on the theoretical challenges associated with figurative language, and specifically the issue of metaphor. In a profoundly influential discussion, Aristotle defines metaphor as “the application of a name belonging to something else” (*Poetics* 1457b6–7), thus implying that every thing in nature has its proper “name” (the term he regularly uses is *onoma*), and that metaphor is an infringement of this rule, since the “name” of one “thing” is “carried across” (the sense implied by the Greek term *metaphora*) to another. Referred to elegy, the Aristotelian view would have it that *love* is one such thing, *war* another, and that the name of one is carried over to the other.

Since Aristotle's day, Western intellectual traditions have engaged in a continuing dialogue based on the possibility of drawing a distinction between literal and figurative uses of language, though to divergent philosophical ends, and with different valuations of the figurative. At one end of the spectrum, chronologically and philosophically, lies Aristotle himself, who asserts that a capacity for metaphorical expression is the most important manifestation of linguistic mastery, and is a mark of innate genius which cannot be learnt from others, since making good metaphors implies the capacity to see resemblances (*Poetics* 1459a5–8). However, he symptomatically discusses metaphor in the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric* (rather than, say, in the *Metaphysics*), indicating that metaphor is a matter for the poet or rhetorician rather than the philosopher who is concerned with what things *are*, ontologically, and that he sees metaphor as an added extra or adornment to “literal” uses of language rather than as fundamental to the functioning of language.

Others view the metaphorical as basic to language – there are no originary literal terms, it is suggested, but an on-going process of metaphorization as language gets used, with things habitually described in terms of each other. At the other end of this spectrum, then, lie the recent exponents of the so-called cognitive theory of metaphor, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. They regard metaphors not as “turns” of phrase (which could imply that there is somehow a more basic or literal way of saying what you want) but as the way we habitually use language, and so at the very heart of how we think and try to understand our world and our experience, not simply in everyday conversation but, albeit heavily encrusted and hardly recognizable, in the most rarefied philosophical thinking. In *Metaphors We Live By* (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and *Philosophy in the Flesh* (Lakoff and Johnson 1999), the authors see abstract thought as inseparable from bodily experience – movement, orientation, temperature and so on. Thus *happiness is up* (“on a high”), *sadness is down* (“depressed”), *affection is warmth* (“an old flame”). *Purposes are destinations*, so love is a journey (even when it has “gone off the rails”), and so is composing an essay (“still some way to go”), whilst love and writing come together whenever there is a fantastic climax (see Kennedy 1993, 59–60). Metaphorical thought itself is not exempt from this, for *similarity is closeness*, whether it be “two peas in a pod” or (if you like your language to emphasize the erotic in the metaphorical) “spoons in a drawer”.

In his searching examination of this dialogue about figurative language, Jacques Derrida suggests that neither a theory of language that seeks to make concepts stable (and so treats metaphor as an aberrant feature), nor one which seeks to represent language as restlessly mobile provides the answer, but rather sets up a debate in which you can position yourself differently. If you want to criticize Aristotle, it is easy to make the point that his terminology of metaphor is itself analyzable as metaphorical: a frequent term Aristotle uses of “literal” language is *oikeîos*, suggesting that the term is “at home”,

whilst his definition of metaphor, cited above, as the application of “a name belonging to something else” involves the importation of a word that is “foreign” (*allotrios*). However, as Derrida emphasizes, chaos does not follow from this, for within the system Aristotle elaborates, “metaphor” is never simply a metaphor, but rather it acts within his discussions as a concept, its meaning “captured” (as the derivation of *concept* from *capere* can suggest) and stabilized (the force of the *con-* prefix, as in *comprehended*, fully grasped); that is the effect of the larger system that Aristotle has *constituted* in his works, and so *positioned* himself on questions of ontology, presence, meaning etc.

To overlook this process of stabilization is to ignore the role of system in meaning, as words do not simply exist in isolation and gain their meaning purely by reference to ‘things’ in the world, but they generate meaning out of their interaction with – their similarities to and differences from – other words. Thus Aristotle’s concept of metaphor is sustained within a system that sets it in specific relationships with a host of terms – mimesis, logos, nature and so on – that in their interaction produce the distinctively Aristotelian, ontologically orientated, world-view (Derrida 1983, 232). Change those relationships, and you change what you think metaphor is, and you change your world-view as well.

So, metaphor is an inalienable part (to give a twist on Aristotle’s imagery) of philosophical thinking, however much for their own argumentative ends some philosophical systems such as Aristotle’s seek to see it as “foreign” to it, and others such as Lakoff and Johnson’s seek to place it center-stage. It is the interplay of “stability” and “movement” within and across “boundaries” that sustains the debate, and nobody – not Aristotle, not Derrida himself – stands in a privileged position outside this. Of course, we never cease seeking to define, but to define is to set the boundaries of a “term” (itself associated with the Latin *terminus*, a boundary-stone), to ordain what lies “inside” and what “outside” – and that can change with the passage of time as the immigrant term settles and becomes “naturalized”, or the boundaries themselves are altered over time and circumstance. A discourse geared to ontology seeks to bracket off this temporal aspect, to attribute meaning to a word *as if* it stood outside time and usage and might not change, as if its meaning could be fully present to the user and will always be the *same*. In resistance to this, Derrida offers his (in)famous neologism *différance*, as a reminder of the role of difference and time in constituting meaning and of the way that difference renders full meaning provisional and deferred, never fully present to us in the way we crave. All of which contributes to a sense that desire, the interplay of absence and presence, plays a role in language no less than love.

When the Romans came to render the Greek *metaphora*, they came up with *translatio*, likewise “a carrying across”. This acts as a reminder that the processes of metaphorization and translation are envisaged in similar terms and thus well worth bringing together for comparison. You might like to think of metaphor as a carrying across within a language, translation as a carrying across between languages, and the processes attract similar terminology in their discussion: can there be a “literal” translation any more than a “literal” use of a word? As we turn Greek and Latin texts into English, we soon become aware that the words we are translating do not present themselves as one-for-one substitutions, but need to be accommodated to a host of cultural, historical and ideological negotiations. Recall the issue of the translation of *vis*: are we to render it as “force”? As “rape”? Which version makes that term “present” to us? Do we want to domesticate it or naturalize it so that it accords with our assumptions and beliefs? Or re-present it in

exotic or unexpected ways that shock us out of our received ways of thinking? The question of our desire and its satisfaction is already at play in that question. Do we need to translate anew when the system of assumptions and beliefs to which we previously accommodated it have shifted? Are our acts of translation provisional, awaiting substitution in turn? Translation, particularly in the case of classical texts, should make us acutely aware not only of the similarities but of differences associated with the passage of time.

Historically, elegy, whether lamenting the dead or appealing to the beloved, presents itself as a discourse of desire, having as its central preoccupation the attempt through language to turn absence into presence. And this brings us back to Ovid. In the opening poems of Book 1 of the *Amores*, the protagonist receives a rapid education in love's figures and tropes, as Ovid conceives of them within his system of thought and world-view. At the very start of the opening poem, he portrays himself as *determined* to be an epic poet – that is he has laid down the boundaries within which he intends to operate and intends to stick with them (*Am.* 1.1.1–2):

arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conveniente modis.

I was preparing to put forth in solemn rhythm weapons and violent wars, with my subject-matter corresponding to my metre.

This staunchly-held view has some Aristotelian characteristics: “weapons” and “violent wars” are the proper names for things, these things have a genre proper to them, epic, and that genre has a metre proper to it, the hexameter; the echo in *arma* of the very opening words of the *Aeneid* (*arma virumque cano*, “arms and the man I sing”) clinches that. Here's a stable system of meaning fully in place, and the poet knows where he stands. However, “Cupid is said to have laughed and to have snatched away one foot” (“risisse Cupido/dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem”, *Am.* 1.1.3–4), at one and the same time tripping the poet up and suggesting the transformation of the intended hexameters of epic (twelve metrical feet over two lines) into the elegiac couplets (eleven metrical feet over two lines) in which this poem is being written, thus transforming epic into the genre elegy was at such pains to *differentiate* itself from, as Propertius 2.1 demonstrates. Our would-be epic poet has his first lesson: the word *pes* is not the “name” of just one “thing”. And while we are on the subject of (not just) body parts, *arma* does, of course, signify “weapons”, but can also signify the male genitalia (cf. Adams 1982, 224–5), as when the exiled Ovid claims in his own defence to Augustus in the *Tristia* that “none other than the author, blessed as he was, of that *Aeneid* of yours changed ‘arms and the man’ into ‘Carthaginian romps’” in introducing Aeneas into the bed of Dido, so turning epic into elegy (“et tamen ille tuae felix Aeneidos auctor/contulit in Tyrios arma virumque toros”, *Tr.* 2.533–4; for *conferre* in this sense cf. *OLD* s.v. §7). *arma* is thus as much “at home” in elegy as it is in epic.

At this stage, our poet still has a leg to stand on, and expresses his outrage: “savage child, who gave you this jurisdiction over poetry?” (“quis tibi, saeve puer, dedit hoc in carmina iuris?”, *Am.* 1.1.5). The gods, he argues, each have their own things, Minerva her weapons, Venus her torches; each their own domain over which they “rule” (cf. *regnare*, *Am.* 1.1.9), Ceres the fields, Diana the woods; each their own immediately identifiable attributes, Phoebus his lyre, Mars his spear. Who would regard it as right

(*quis probet* ..., *Am.* 1.1.9) if they were to swap these around? In the word *probet*, we might just detect something like the rebuke of the girl (*'improbe' dicet*, *Ars* 1.665) who thinks her lover's behaviour has exceeded the "proper" bounds; and there are those bold enough to think that Cupid's subsequent response to the poet's rebuke – stringing his bow and firing his arrow (*Am.* 1.1.21–4) – is expressed in terms that can also serve to signify rather luridly an act of sexual *vis* inflicted on the poet (cf. Kennedy 1993, 62–3). He has protested that Cupid has "great, indeed too powerful kingdoms" ("sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna", *Am.* 1.1.13). The term *ambitiose* in the following line conjures up an image of the god "moving around" (cf. *amb-ire*), suggesting an aggrandizing tendency to march into the territories of others as he looks toward yet another conquest, bringing yet more within his ambit (*Am.* 1.1.14–15):

cur opus affectas ambitiose novum?
an, quod ubique, tuum est?

Why in your ambition do you set your sights on a fresh affair? Is that which is everywhere, yours?

There is a play here on the common use of the verb *affectare*, "to seek to gain control of fresh territory" (cf. *OLD affecto* s.v. §3), but with an unexpected object, *opus*, a term of bewildering applicability that can suggest "task" but also "literary work" (*OLD* s.v. §9c) and even "a sexual act" (*OLD* s.v. §1d). There is even the suggestion in *Am.* 1.1.15 that Cupid's ambitions may be the world-wide empire, "without limits of space and time," the "empire without end" promised by Jupiter to the Romans in Virgil *Aeneid* 1.278–9 ("his [sc. Romanis] nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:/imperium sine fine dedi"). Could it be that desire renders permeable the boundaries, temporal as well as spatial, of everything you might mention – a kind of Derridean *différance avant la lettre*? Having raised that intriguing possibility, we will have to postpone indefinitely (as *Am.* 1.1.15. itself does) a definitive answer to that one. In the meantime, lesson two: no matter how *determined* you are to be something (like an epic poet, or a lover), to lay down the boundaries within which you intend to operate and stick to them, and to set the limits that you want to define your self, it remains the case that the language you use, and the response to it, can always transgress those boundaries, sometimes to your acute discomfiture. The most you can do is to be a *simulator*, to seek to evoke through your words presence and identity, and hope that the world plays along.

Like the girl in *Ars* 1.676, who comes around to seeing her lover's "wickedness" as "like a service rendered", our poetic victim of *vis* soon begins to realize the benefits of Cupid's interference. Although he begins the second poem of *Amores* 1 with a doggedly ontological question prompted by a restlessness that prevents him from going to sleep ("What shall I say this is [*esse quid hoc dicam*], that my blankets appear so hard to me, and my bedclothes don't stay put on my couch ...", *Am.* 1.2.1–2), he quickly "yields" to love (*cedimus ...? cedamus*, *Am.* 1.2.9–10), not in the sense of engaging in or describing physical sex (for any sniff of that we will have to wait for *Am.* 1.5), nor by expressing desire for a particular beloved, but by producing a torrent of figural language (*Am.* 1.2.11–18), culminating in a florid elaboration of that aspect of the *militia amoris* trope so favoured by the elegiac poets, the triumph ceremony

(*Am.* 1.2.19–52), piling up ever more *recherché* similarities and troping for the sheer joy of it, as he will over and over again in the poems to come (e.g. *Am.* 1.9 and 2.12).

The lover-poet here evokes Catullus, who had already played with the association of sleeplessness with desire – the desire to create, expressed in terms of a longing for the presence once more of his friend and fellow-poet, Licinius Calvus after they had spent the previous day composing verses (50.7–13):

atque illinc abii tuo lepore
incensus, Licini, facetiisque,
ut nec me miserum cibus iuaret
nec somnus tegeter quiete ocellos,
sed toto indomitus furore lecto
versarer, cupiens videre lucem,
ut tecum loquerer simulque ut essem.

And I went away from there inflamed by your cleverness and humour, so that neither food gave pleasure, wretched me, nor sleep covered my eyes with rest, but out of control with madness I turned all over the bed, desirous of seeing the light, so that I could talk with you and be in your presence.

Through the earlier use of the verb *lusimus* (50.2), the act of composing has been equated with the dynamics of sexual dalliance (*ludere*), and Catullus has departed manifesting the symptoms of passion, heat (*incensus*, 8), frenzy (*furore*, 11), and the desire for the presence of the beloved (*cupiens .../... simul ... ut essem*, 12–13); *me miserum* (9), though formally the object of the verb *iuaret*, mimics the ejaculation of the stricken lover as he recognises he has fallen victim to desire (as in *Ov. Am.* 1.1.25, *me miserum!*; cf. *Prop.* 1.1.1, “Cynthia prima suis *miserum me* cepit ocellis”, “Cynthia first with her eyes captured me, poor wretch”). The physical *turning* in bed (*toto ... lecto/versarer*, 11–12), a symptom shared by the poet in *Am.* 1.2.4 (*lassaque versati corporis ossa dolent*, “and the weary bones of my tossing body are full of pain”), alludes to the image Greek uses for the “turn” of speech a figure effects, *tropê* (cf. *LSJ* s.v. §I.b.3), just as *figura* in Latin alludes to the “posture” of the body, not least, as Ovid elsewhere attests, when it is having sex (*Ars* 3.771–2):

nota sibi sit quaeque; modos a corpore certos
sumite: non omnes una figura decet.

Let each woman get to know herself; adopt particular postures taking account of your body: one position does not suit all.

As Roy Gibson notes in his commentary on this couplet (2003, 391), “*modus* and *figura* are common Latin terms for *tropoi/schemata synousias*”, that is, the positions of intercourse, or, as the Greek term would have it, of “being together” (*syn-ousia*). But the traffic of signification goes both ways, for the “being together” of two bodies in sexual intercourse tropes the “figures” of language which marry two concepts. Herein lies the attraction for the elegist, at once lover and poet, whose desire is expressed *simultaneously* in the domains of the sexual and the linguistic – his language aspires to be equally “at home” in both.

However, the calm, stable, quasi-ontological language of “being together” embraces only one aspect of sexual intercourse/figural language, failing to capture its agitated motions as two “struggle” to become one. Propertius, asked how it is that he writes love poems so often (“quaeritis, unde mihi totiens scribantur amores”, 2.1.1), responds that the girl herself creates his inspiration (“ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit”, 2.1.4). But whilst she is thus marked as the object of both physical and linguistic desire, it is what he does with her that differentiates the elegist (2.1.43–6):

navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator,
 enumerat miles vulnera, pastor ovis;
 nos contra angusto *versantes* proelia lecto:
 qua pote quisque, in ea conterat arte diem.

The sailor tells stories about the winds, the ploughman about oxen, the soldier counts his wounds, the shepherd his sheep; I on the other hand *turning* in a narrow bed (?recount?) “battles”: let each person spend his time in the skill he practises best.

Telling stories and counting up (43–4) are two forms of discursive activity with which the elegist contrasts his own (*nos contra* ..., 45). But how *do* you construe line 45? Is *nos* to be taken as singular or plural? Is the bed “narrow” (*angusto*) because he’s alone in it ... or not alone in it ... or because it’s a Callimachean bed, as befits a poet? Is *versantes* physical (cf. *OLD* s.v. §4b: “turn (one’s limbs) this way and that (as a sign of restlessness, etc.)”) or rhetorical (cf. *OLD* s.v. §7: “vary the expression of an idea”)? Transitive, governing *proelia*, or intransitive? Unless we give up the struggle, as many have, and change *versantes* to *versamus*, we need to supply a main verb unexpressed in this line. You may well agree with Propertius when he says the skill the elegist practices best is troping; but you could go mad, quite, quite mad trying to translate the way he says it. Line 45 is quintessential elegy and pure Propertius: *as* indeterminate in its meaning, *as* impossible to understand, *as* infuriatingly difficult to read, *as* enthralling *as* ... the girl who has robbed you of your freedom to say what you mean! Elegy’s concern is not only with the language of love but with the love of language and (*me miserum!*) the desire for expression that entails.

FURTHER READING

This chapter inevitably reflects some of my earlier thoughts on this topic in Chapter 3 of Kennedy 1993, 46–63, though the eagle-eyed will home in on many differences that the passage of time has introduced. The tropes of *militia amoris* and *servitium amoris* have long attracted the most attention: for collections of material and discussion of the former see Murgatroyd 1975 and Gale 1997, and of the latter see Copley 1947, Lyne 1979, Murgatroyd 1981, McCarthy 1998, and Fitzgerald 2000, 72–7. These tropes are implicated in the issue of violence in elegy: for recent discussions with an emphasis on gender relations see in particular Fredrick 1997, Greene 1999, and James 2003, 184–97. For Derrida’s critique of Aristotle’s theory of metaphor in his essay “White Mythology”, see Derrida 1983, 207–71 with the analysis of Kennedy 2010. The cognitive theory of metaphor associated with the work of Lakoff and Johnson 1980 and 1999 is examined with particular reference to the language of love and the emotions in Kövecses 1988 and 2000. For the continuities between ancient and modern in treatments of desire and language, see

Janan 1994, esp. 1–36. Pichon 1902, 75–303 remains an invaluable dictionary of the erotic phraseology of the Roman elegists (in a curious link between the amatory tropes of elegy and the psychoanalytical discourse of desire, my own copy once belonged to Ernest Freud, grandson of Sigmund, and the child who prompted the latter's reflections on the interplay of presence and absence in the *fort/da* game). Adams 1982 demonstrates how many words in common Latin usage have sexual associations, and is a mine of stimulating and provocative information for the student of Roman elegy.

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CHAPTER 13

Elegiac Meter: Opposites Attract

Llewelyn Morgan

NUMÉROBIS: JE SUIS, MON CHER AMI, TRÉS HEUREUX DE TE VOIR.
PANORAMIX: C'EST UN ALEXANDRIN.

(Goscinny and Uderzo 1965, 7)

A story was told about the compositional abilities of Benjamin Hall Kennedy, Headmaster of Shrewsbury School and these days best known for *Kennedy's Latin Primer*, for many Classicists a formative presence in their linguistic education (How 1904, 121; for the primer, Beard 2008):

In an Oxford common-room it was asserted that any intelligible English could be turned into Latin elegiac verse. A guest thereupon produced from his pocket this circular:

“Reverend Sir, You are requested to attend a meeting of the Bridge Committee on Saturday, the 5th of November, at twelve o'clock, to consider Mr. Diffles's proposal for laying down gas-pipes.

“We are, Revd. Sir,

“Your obedient servants,

“Smith and Son, Solicitors”

This was sent to Dr. Kennedy, who returned these lines:

“Consilio bonus intersis de ponte rogamus

Saturni sacro, vir reverende, die.

Nonae, ne frustrere, dies erit ille Novembres,

Sextaque delectos convocat hora viros.

Carbonum luci suadet struxisse canales
 Diphilus: ambigitur prosit an obsit opus.
 Haec tibi devincti Fabri, natusque paterque,
 Actores socii, vir reverende, dabant.”

We may not be able to match Kennedy’s facility in Latin elegiacs. We may even struggle to lament the passing of an intellectual culture that set such store by it: perhaps it conjures up too easily a world of radical socio-economic disparities, workhouses and diphtheria. I certainly am not proposing here that verse composition is a prerequisite of a proper engagement with Latin poetry in elegiacs, but I do want to argue that we are closing ourselves off from an essential dimension of this poetry if we do not direct our attention to its meter once in a while, and concomitantly fail to appreciate the level of metrical awareness that these authors could assume in their ancient readership. *Elegi* is before all else a *metrical* denomination, and my contention is that Roman literary culture never lost sight of this fact. By extension, neither should we.

Much of the communicative power of elegiac meter, as we shall see, lies in the range of conventions that influenced its deployment. By conventions I mean established norms of composition which nonetheless admit of contravention, which will be the more striking the more unconventional they seem. But beneath these artfully manipulable conventions lie the fundamental and invariable rules of the form, and I should start by sketching those.

The elegiac couplet or distich is an “epodic” combination of two dactylic lengths (a dactyl is — ∪, a long syllable and two shorts), the “dactylic hexameter” (or just “hexameter”; in Latin most often [*uersus*] *herous*) followed by the “dactylic pentameter” (or plain “pentameter”). The hexameter is most conveniently analysed into six dactylic feet, in the first four of which the two short places of the dactyl may readily be “contracted” into one long, producing a spondee (— —). In the fifth foot such contraction was rare, though even more so in Latin hexameters than Greek (Raven 1965, 92), and especially so in the Latin elegists (Platnauer 1951, 38–9): there are no examples at all in the Tibullan corpus, for example, and the general resistance to contraction at this point was no doubt to preserve the last opportunity for the line to assert its essential, dactylic identity – the sixth and last foot of the hexameter was foreshortened, always notionally a spondee, although the second syllable could be short, as it was considered to be lengthened by the pause that followed the end of a line (Quint. *Inst.* 9.4.93), the principle known as *brevis in longo*. A simple schema for the dactylic hexameter might thus look like this:

— ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — —

A break between words within a foot (a “caesura”) was generally required after the first or second (if it was a dactyl) place of the third foot or after the first syllable of the fourth.

In the pentameter there were two parallel examples of a colon sometimes referred to as a “hemiepes”, corresponding to 2 ½ dactylic feet (— ∪ — ∪ —). But when the colon is repeated in the second half of the pentameter, no contraction (i.e. no substitution of

spondees for dactyls) is allowed. There was also invariably a word-break at the end of the first half of the pentameter (marked below by |). So an equivalent schema for the dactylic pentameter is as follows:

— ∞ — ∞ — | — ∞ — ∞ —

And for an example of a complete scanned elegiac couplet (illustrated by the opening two lines of Tibullus 1.1):

— ∞ — ∞ — — — ∞ — ∞ ∞ — —
divitias alius fulvo sibi congerat auro
— ∞ — — — — ∞ — ∞ — —
et teneat culti iugera multa soli

The hexameter was of course one of the most commonly used meters of all in antiquity, on its own and (as in elegy) in combination with other metrical lengths; indeed the *herous*, like the epic genre for which it represented the classic vehicle, became the benchmark against which other meters tended to define themselves, and we shall see this happening even within the elegiac couplet. By virtue of its presence in elegy, the dactylic pentameter is also an extremely common metrical length, but it almost never appears in other combinations or on its own, and is thus thoroughly identified with the elegiac couplet: for an example of an isolated pentameter which seems to play on the singularity of its isolation (that is, is still accompanied by a “ghost” hexameter), see Cugusi 1985 and Morgan 2010, 362–3.

Formal Characteristics

This coupling of hexameter and pentameter has seemed to critics to possess an intrinsic character of a formal kind arising from the encounter between two dactylic lengths which are different yet closely related. Georg Luck’s paragraph-long attempt to capture this inherent tension in elegiac meter is particularly suggestive (Luck 1969, 28):

The charm of the elegiac couplet – a charm easily felt but hard to describe – may be explained in a number of ways. There is an element of surprise in the pentameter: it seems to begin like the hexameter which has preceded it,

— ∞ — ∞ — ...

but instead of rolling along majestically, it suddenly stops and reverses, becoming its own echo. Moreover, there is an intensely “personal” element in the pentameter: instead of reaching out to embrace the world, it hesitates, it reconsiders and ends on an abrupt final note – whose abruptness is softened immediately by the renewal of the rolling beat in the following hexameter. The break in the middle of the pentameter and the echo-like effect of its second half are highly characteristic.

Luck’s account contains more than I have space to investigate here, but one aspect of the movement of the elegiac couplet that has exercised the metaphorical talents of other critics besides Luck is its “hesitant” quality, the way the confidence and ambition of the hexameter seem to be stymied in the pentameter. Ovid likes to represent

it as a metrical limp (*Am.* 3.1.8, *Tr.* 3.1.11–12; cf. Hinds 1985, 18–19; Barchiesi 1994, 135–7), whilst Barchiesi borrows Heinze’s metaphor of breathlessness (“haftet der elegischen Erzählung etwas von Kurzatmigkeit an”: Heinze 1919, 76) to describe the false trail, verbal and metrical, laid by the opening of Ovid’s *Amores* (Barchiesi, 1997, 23):

The reader of *Amores* 1.1 could well have thought that he was about to read a poem in hexameters, *Arma gravi numero violentaque bella* ...; or at least an attempt at a poem in hexameters, ... *parabam/ edere, materia* ...; up to the moment in which the second line suffers from shortness of breath and reveals itself to be a pentameter – just when we are reading a word that in the language of literary criticism ought to indicate the perfect match between subject matter and metrical form: *conveniente modis*.

What all these responses to elegiac metrical form have in common is a recognition that the metrical scheme stages a dynamic encounter. The power of the pentameter largely resides in its role as an answering voice to the hexameter it does and yet also does not resemble. Another shared insight here is what we might call the “infoling” quality of the couplet, the very strong tendency of couplets to be syntactically independent of each other. In Heinze’s words, “The elegiac distich, metrically a self-contained unit, strives constantly after syntactic unity as well” (Heinze 1919, 75), in contrast to the expansive, unconstrained quality of continuous hexameters (Heinze is comparing and contrasting Ovid’s elegiac and hexametrical narratives of Daedalus and Icarus in *Ars* 2 and *Met.* 8; cf. Sharrock, 1994, 180–1), and this is an implication also of Luck’s remark on the pentameter’s “abrupt final note”. The point is also made by Kenney in an analysis of elegiac form which in addition gives weight to the elegiac poets’ self-conscious manipulation of their metrical vehicle. Kenney explains how “Ovid seems almost to have gone out of his way to accentuate the inherent limitations of the couplet form”, avoiding enjambment between couplets to an even greater degree than his elegiac predecessors (cf. Platnauer 1951, 27; and Wilkinson 1963, 133–4 on the way Augustan elegists “turned to making a virtue of their medium’s confinement”), and how “in securing the obligatory disyllable at the end of the pentameter ... [Ovid] often resorts to the use of colourless words in this position” (Kenney and Clausen 1982, 455). Kenney continues:

The effect, by throwing the verbal interest back into the body of the verse, is to make each couplet even more autonomous than its metrical nature already dictates: and Ovid further accentuates this tendency by his distinctively antiphonal treatment of hexameter and pentameter.

So we have a form that embodies a creative tension between hexameter and pentameter, and which also seemed to insist on the autonomy of each couplet – a characteristic which in itself enforces the hexameter/pentameter contrast, as we shall see. But before we turn in that direction, let me allow just a hint of the rich implications of Luck et al.’s analyses, and of the necessary limitations of the account of elegiacs you are reading. Something I might have picked up on, but shan’t, is Luck’s identification of a “personal”, inward-looking dynamic in the couplet. Not only does this follow well from my recent remarks about autonomy and “infoling” but it also chimes with acknowledged

impulses of both Latin elegiac poetry (*res ... domi gestas et mea bella*, Ov. *Am.* 2.18.12) and its Greek predecessors. Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004), 34 comment to similar effect on the “realistic subjects” and “personal experiences” that tended to gravitate to Greek elegy, and the “up-to-date” and relatively informal character it pretended to possess. But I shall pursue the “self-contained” quality of the couplet in a slightly different direction, aiming amongst other things to ground my preliminary claim that meter *per se* is never a dispensable element of ancient poetic composition, and indeed is more likely to be central to the exercise, and formative.

My starting-point will once again be a remark by Alessandro Barchiesi, one that is (importantly for my purposes) not overtly metrical in nature (Barchiesi 1997, ix–x.):

Every Ovidian scholar could tell you that the fourth line of *Metamorphoses*, *ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen*, is one of the most tantalizing moments in the whole of Latin poetry. *Perpetuum*, “continuous,” encapsulates a whole debate about the nature of that poem and its genre, structure, relationship to models, and poetics. Much less attention has been paid to the first line of the *Fasti*, *Tempora cum causis Latium digesta per annum*, and even less to the implications of *digesta*, “distributed,” “discontinuous.” So, if *perpetuum* is viewed as a key to the epic poem, why not try *digesta* as a meaningful description of the elegiac poem?

Heinze, with typical insight but perhaps a trifle too mechanically, had contrasted Ovid’s style in the *Metamorphoses* and in his elegiac poetry by reference to the requirements of their metrical forms. The relationship between the content of, say, *Fasti* and its elegiac shape is now understood to be more nuanced, thanks to such scholars as Hinds (Hinds 1987 especially) and Barchiesi. But relationship there undoubtedly is, and when we find the essence of the poetic exercise being encapsulated in the terms *perpetuus* and *digestus*, in principles of discontinuity and continuity, it is no coincidence that we are echoing accounts of the character of the metrical system that gives elegy its name. The elegiac couplet hampers the development of narrative, insists on an episodic character. When the *Metamorphoses* tests our tolerance of that claim to be a *perpetuum carmen* far beyond its limits, with a poem simultaneously spectacularly continuous and thoroughly decentered, there can be no question that at one level it is enacting its metrical character, the hexametrical (i.e. continuous) work of an author who self-consciously maintains an elegiac (i.e. episodic) aesthetic. Equally, of course, that elegiac principle of discontinuity, traceable to the metrical vehicle itself, is reflected in the unpredictable and multifarious content of all the elegists’ books. Short poems, Hellenistic ideals of polished brevity, and a commitment to dramatic, unanticipated shifts of material and tone – these impulses are discernibly indebted to the single, insurmountable *sine qua non* of Elegy, the succinct and self-contained elegiac couplet.

Testing Convention

To some extent the foregoing has been encouragement to secure a mildly technical understanding of the Latin elegiac couplet, and I shall give more precise examples soon of the profit to be gained by a reader who appreciates both the fundamental rules that governed the composition of elegiac couplets, and also the more subtle conventions

which only become apparent after many years of metrically alert reading of Latin elegiac verse – or alternatively a single day’s close inspection of Maurice Platnauer’s *Latin Elegiac Verse*. But I would emphasize my qualification “mildly”: we need to be circumspect in our use of technical analyses of meter. What is surely most valuable for us to secure is something approximating to a contemporary perception of the form, and although a detailed sense of usage such as Platnauer provides will take us a long way towards that, we also need something more. West 1982, 44 n. 41 quite justifiably calls “pentameter” “an absurd name for a verse which does not contain five of anything,” but this way of describing the second line of this epodic dactylic system of course provides elegiac poets with one of their most familiar self-reflexive tropes. We have had hints already of how poets develop the conventions of the form in line with their own perception of it: the private and restricted elegiac ethos in turn influences the elegists to exaggerate a tendency towards self-containment intrinsically present in the elegiac couplet, and our sense of where rules end and perceptions begin is thoroughly undermined.

I anticipated earlier that, beside the fundamental rules of the form, there are also conventional patterns of verse construction in Latin elegiac poetry, and an appreciation of these will open up to readers an essential dimension of elegiac composition and metrical expressiveness. A good example of the benefits of perusing Platnauer is the famous anecdote preserved by Seneca the Elder to illustrate his assessment that Ovid *non ignoravit vitia sua sed amavit* (“was not unaware of his vices but rather in love with them”), and lacked not the judgement but the will to suppress the *licentia* of his poetry (*Contr.* 2.2.12). Citing the account of Albinovanus Pedo, another poet, Seneca describes how friends of Ovid had asked him to remove three lines from his poetry which they appeared to find in especially poor taste; whereupon Ovid has agreed, with the rider that he could exempt three lines of his own choosing. The two lists of course contained the same three lines: Ovid was a great anticipator of criticism (Casali 1997–8 and 1998; Morgan 2003). One of the lines was Ovid’s description of the Minotaur at *Ars* 2.24:

— ∞ — ∪ | ∪ — — ∞ — ∪ ∪ —
semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem

This line is cited by Platnauer for its unusual combination of a “weak caesura” in the second foot (marked above by |) and a dactyl in the first foot, which (given the strong convention that the last word of the pentameter should be disyllabic) generates an unusually balanced pentameter, the two sides absolutely parallel (Platnauer 1951, 14–15). Lines of this shape, Platnauer tells us, are avoided by Latin elegists, and rather typically Platnauer more or less leaves it there, with just a remark that such lines “form a kind of jingle”. But we can use his findings to say more. First of all, there is an obvious iconic motive in couching a description of the thoroughly biform Minotaur in a perfectly balanced pentameter. But Platnauer’s statistics also help to explain what made this line so egregious, in the view of Ovid’s friends and the poet himself. If this form of verse was avoided, it was presumably because it was too predictable, followed too slavishly the pentameter’s in-built tendency to self-division and echo. Yet, by the same token, it surely

explains why Ovid was determined to keep it: what could be more true than this ultimate pentameter to the oeuvre of the poet who claimed to be the Virgil of elegy: *tantum se nobis elegi debere fatentur, / quantum Vergilio nobile debet epos* (*Rem. Am.* 395–6). Or more true to the portentous Minotaur, of course.

A complementary example, illustrating the strength of the convention of the disyllabic final word of the pentameter (discussed by Kenney above), is Martial's most famous epigram, 1.32:

non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare:
hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.

I do not like you, Sabidius, and I cannot say why./ All I can say is, I do not like you.

The pentameter of this epigram exhibits a most unusual feature in the concluding monosyllable *te*: “there are no monosyllabic endings in Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid and Ausonius” (Harkness 1910, 171; Platnauer 1951, 24), and very few indeed also in Martial. Here of course it facilitates the symmetry of hexameter and pentameter, but *non amo te* at the cadence of the pentameter also represents a deliberate instance of unartistic writing. Martial, in expressing an inability to explain his dislike (or rather, an insufficient interest in Sabidius to make the effort to analyse his antipathy, an implication also present in the dismissive brevity of the poem as a whole), finds the ideal metrical vehicle in a disposition of words which suggests that no effort has been expended in its composition.

Another Ovidian moment, explicitly metrical this time, takes us to that critical juncture in the elegiac couplet where hexameter meets pentameter. At *Am.* 2.17.21–22 the poet superbly implicates his metrical vehicle in an apologia for his shamefully undignified relationship with the *puella*. Calypso fell for a mortal; Thetis was married to Peleus and Egeria to Numa, and (2.17.19–22):

Vulcano Venerem, quamvis incude relicta
turpiter obliquo claudicet ille pede.
carminis hoc ipsum genus impar; sed tamen apte
iungitur herous cum brevior modo.

... Venus was married to Vulcan, though as he leaves the forge/ he limps repulsively on crooked foot./ This very kind of verse is unequal; and yet/ the heroic measure is fittingly joined with the shorter.

Ovid in fact anticipates the explicit reference to meter in the second couplet with his development of Vulcan's ugliness and *prima facie* incompatibility with Venus: Vulcan's *limp* on a distorted *foot* recalls elegy's regular habit of defining its difference from epic as a matter of lameness, weakness in respect of a foot. But when he turns explicitly to the elegiac couplet and finds in it also a counter-intuitively harmonious matching of opposites, his point is illustrated in an intriguing fashion at the cadence of the hexametrical line 21, *sed tamen apte*. Here the strong punctuation at the end of the fourth foot (the “bucolic diaeresis”) and the choppy rhythm generated by the last three words (which are all short, and also preclude the normal tendency for the rhythm of the line-end to be heard in the natural stress of the language) disrupt the expected cadence of the hexameter, and lead McKeown to wonder if Ovid isn't communicating in his metrical vehicle a side implication present in the text

(McKeown 1998, ad loc.): this disruption at the end of the hexameter rather subverts the message of harmonious coexistence, giving emphasis to the element of incompatibility implied in the *exempla* of Calypso, Thetis, Egeria, and Vulcan. The meeting of hexameter and pentameter is made awkward and unsatisfying, in other words. McKeown's is an interesting reading, and may even be half-right. But it needs supplementation. When a line fails to conclude in an expected or satisfactory fashion, as happens with *Am.* 2.17.21, one impression that the reader should receive is that, precisely, the line hasn't properly finished. So in fact it is equally easy to see Ovid's deliberate introduction of an unsatisfactory line-cadence as a way of tumbling the reader over into the following pentameter (just as the language does) – dissembling, in other words, the otherwise clear distinction between hexameter and pentameter, and illustrating their intimate relationship. And yet McKeown is surely right to see this metrical effect as having specific implications for the hexameter that is so misused. The *herous* is tarnished by its association with this humbler form, losing the dignity of its conventional close, and that was indeed an implication of all Ovid's examples of divine morganatic liaisons, and in the first instance of his own *turpis* relationship with the *puella*. Whoever has hit on the right characterization of this metrical effect, what is perfectly clear is how much work in this poetic composition is being done on the metrical plane.

Finally, an illustration of the characteristic autonomy of elegiac couplets, and the concomitantly powerful effect that accrued to any contravention of that convention, always assuming it was done sparingly: contravention has no force if the convention is not securely established as such. At Prop. 4.10.40–41 the exploit that gave M. Claudius Marcellus the right to dedicate the *spolia opima* to Jupiter Feretrius is lent a subtle coloration when the name of the Gallic chieftain he slew in single combat “exceeds the couplet” (Hutchinson 2006, ad loc.):

Claudius Eridanum traiectos arcuit hostes,
Belgica cui vasti parma relata ducis,
Virdumari.

Claudius drove back the enemy that had crossed the Po,/ and brought back the Belgic shield of the massive chief/ Virdumarus.

The disproportionate size of Virdumarus is perfectly conveyed by the staged failure of a couplet to encompass a subject's dimensions. By implication, also, Propertius' trope characterizes the pentameter as a metrical arena of restricted proportions, an insight to which we shall return: Hutchinson (2006, 219–20) has elegant remarks on the kinship of 4.10's “Callimachean” principles of small scale with the modest proportions of the temple and cult of Jupiter Feretrius, but they can easily be mapped onto our earlier considerations of the relationship between elegiac brevity and the self-consciously hampered metrical form of the elegiac couplet. In a text which, typically of Book 4 of Propertius, is tackling material conventionally too momentous for its elegiac form, this contravention of elegiac restriction also carries a strong generic charge: Virdumarus, we might say, finds a more comfortable and appropriate habitat in the hexameter, just as in 4.9 we are encouraged to see Hercules' discomfiture as in large part explained by the fact that he has stumbled out of the “heroic” narrative of *Aeneid* 8 and into the elegiac world of Propertius.

Metrical Ethos

There are more ways than one in which meter contributes to a metrical composition – in which meter signifies, to put it more succinctly. Paul Fussell, writing about English-language poetry, distinguishes (for heuristic purposes: they are not easily distinguishable in practice) three sources of metrical meaning: the very fact that language has been metricized, which can in itself stylize and formalize its linguistic content; the manipulation of the established conventions of a form, examples of which we have already considered; and thirdly, the capacity of meters to mean “by association and convention” (Fussell 1979, 12–13):

Because of its associations with certain kinds of statements and feelings, a given meter tends to maintain a portion of its meaning, whether symbolic sounds are attached to it or not. In the limerick, for example, the very pattern of short anapestic lines is so firmly associated with light impudence or indecency that a poet can hardly write in anything resembling this measure without evoking smiles. To “translate” a limerick into, say, iambic tetrameter, is to drain off the comedy: we must conclude that a great deal of the comedy inheres by now in the meter alone.

Elegiac meter is not so instantly and precisely evocative as the meter of a limerick. But we have already seen evidence that the couplet possesses a peculiar movement that critics find it easy to assess metaphorically: the couplet has a “personal”, self-contained ethos, and in this case it is hard to separate the influence of formal characteristics of the meter, the poets’ accentuation of those formal characteristics, and the associations of the form derived from past usage and past theory. Whatever the source, though, the power of the pentameter especially to communicate a retiring ethos is evident from an account such as the following on the episode in *Fasti* 3 where Ovid describes the brief sojourn of Anna, sister of Dido (and of the vengeful Pygmalion), on the island of Malta (Barchiesi 1997, 22):

One of her adventures is a period spent as a guest of Battus, the hospitable king of the island of Malta. The island is small but welcoming: *Haec* (says Battus to Anna) *tellus, quantulacumque, tua est* (3.572: “this land, tiny as it is, is yours”). But this small-scale and peace-loving king is unable to protect Anna from a threatened war (574, *magnas Pygmalionis opes*): *Frater adest, belloque petit. Rex arma perosus/ “Nos sumus imbelles: tu fuge sospes” ait* (577–78: “Her brother threatened to attack. Detesting warfare, the king told Anna, ‘We are not warlike; you flee to safety’”).

Apparently this good king expresses himself only in pentameters, never in hexameters. The introduction of Battus into the story of Anna is, as far as we know, an innovation of Ovid’s: the value of the episode lies above all in its idyllic and pacifist climate, so consonant with the unarmed world of the *Fasti*, and in its reduction of scale in comparison with the armed adventures of the epic Aeneas. But this Battus is not a complete stranger to us... Battus is the progenitor of that poet Callimachus (son of another Battus) who was canonized in Rome as the “number one” of the elegiac genre (*princeps elegiae*, Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.58) and was regularly referred to as *Battiades* by his Latin-speaking pupils.

Ovid's Battus is indeed a creature of the pentameter, a Callimachean figure who occupies the definitively elegiac element of the elegiac couplet, the adjunct that separates elegiac meter from the consecutive hexameters (and expansive aspirations) of epic. And that non-epic metrical length is identified with the human quintessence of elegiac verse – its pacifism and vulnerability, and its eschewal of the grandeur and boldness of epic. Ovid may thematize his metrical form more than others, just as he makes the other conventional aspects of his poetry topics of that poetry to a greater degree even than his immensely self-referential elegiac predecessors, but I would insist that the ethos of limitation communicated by the metrical vehicle itself informs just as much Tibullus' fantasies of rural simplicity and Propertius' analysis of his troubled love life, even if the latter poets are generally less explicit about the metrical dimension of their poetic creations.

From Propertius Book 4, at any rate, comes a more subtle response by an elegiac poet to his signature meter. The book begins with the narrator presenting Rome to his Roman reader as if to a visitor to his own city, and true to that opening introduces the contemporary Roman to the very different city of Rome's early history (4.1.1–6):

Hoc quodcumque vides, hospes, qua maxima Roma est
ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit;
atque ubi Navali stant sacra Palatia Phoebos,
Evandri profugae procubuere boves.
fictilibus crevere deis haec aurea templa,
nec fuit opprobrio facta sine arte casa.

Whatever you see before you, stranger, where great Rome stands/ before the coming of Phrygian Aeneas was hill and grass;/ and where the Palatine stands dedicated to Apollo of Ships,/ the cattle of exiled Evander lay down./ These golden temples have grown up for gods of clay,/ and there was no shame in a crudely built hut.

It is quite noticeable in this passage that material is disposed with some care between the hexameter and pentameter of each couplet. Without ever becoming schematic or predictable, Propertius manages to associate the grandeur of contemporary Rome with the majestic movement of the hexameter and the humble origins of the city with the restricted proportions of the pentameter. More precisely, three images of rustic simplicity, *collis et herba fuit*, *procubuere boves* and *facta sine arte casa*, fall in the second colon of the pentameter, the point where “instead of reaching out to embrace the world, it hesitates”, as Luck put it. The placement, needless to say, supports the grand/humble contrast that Propertius is developing, but it also perhaps has the effect of naturalizing in this metrical shape the aetiological interests that (at this stage of Propertius' prologue, at least) the poet seems to be anticipating for his collection. If ultimately Propertius 4.1 stages a complex tussle between elegy, epic, love elegy and Callimachean aetiological elegy, the elegiac couplet is a privileged arena for that contest, a form torn between “lower” and “higher” styles of elegy, but also the very embodiment of a tension between epic and lower aspirations in its uneasy matching of hexameter and pentameter.

An implication of both my last two illustrations has been the constant relevance of the heroic meter, the hexameter alone (unqualified by the pentameter), as a point of contrast and definition for the elegiac couplet: *maxima Roma* is a phenomenon of a heroic

poetry, by which we mean hexametrical; Battus, meanwhile, can only feature in an elegiac version of myths derived from the *Aeneid*. A poem that has come down to us on the edges of the codices of Tibullus, Domitius Marsus' epitaph for Tibullus (fr. 7 Courtney; 5 Fogazza) can illustrate vividly the divergent associations of the component parts of elegy, and the scope for a poet to exploit them:

te quoque Vergilio comitem non aequa, Tibulle,
Mors iuvenem campos misit ad Elysios,
ne foret aut elegis molles qui fletet amores
aut caneret forti regia bella pede.

You too, Tibullus, inequitable death sent as Virgil's comrade young to the Elysian Fields,
lest any live to weep soft loves in elegiacs, or sing of royal wars in vigorous rhythm.

One thing that this exquisite little composition alerts us to is a dimension of metrical significance in relation to elegy that I have thus far sidelined. *Fleret* here gestures at an association between elegy and the act of mourning, which the poem as a whole of course embodies, that is well-established in Roman responses to the form. Hinds (1987, 103–4) collects the evidence (the poetic *locus classicus* is Ov. *Am.* 3.9.3–4, on this same death of Albius Tibullus in 19 BCE), and recent criticism has traced the notion in interesting ways back to archaic Greek poetry. Callimachus *Hymn* 5, the *Bath of Pallas*, has been read with this association of its anomalous elegiac form in mind (Heinze 1919, 95 n. 1; Hunter 1992, 18–22; Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004, 32). Yatromanolakis, meanwhile, proposes that a much earlier work, Simonides fr. 22 W², reinforces the evidence for a genre of threnodic elegy (which the elegiac lament of Euripides *Andromache* 103–16 would be evoking), coming from a threnody for Antiochus, and itself representing the longing of Antiochus' mother Dyseris for her dead husband (Antiochus' father) Echekratidas, a Thessalian dynast (2001, esp. 219–20). Also in relation to “the new Simonides”, Aloni (2001, 88–91) advances the appealing thesis that “historical narrative elegy and threnody were not necessarily mutually exclusive”. In other words, even the acknowledged group of historical/narrative poems written in elegiacs, such as Mimnermus' *Smyrneis*, might find a rationale for their form in the familiar, later association of elegy with lament, given that “[t]he historical narrative was used for largely threnodic purposes to mourn the dead of the battle and to glorify their memory.” Aloni goes on to interpret the figure of Achilles, invoked in the proem to the Plataea Elegy (fr. 11 W²) as “the model for those referred to in the poem; his eternal glory gives a meaning to the sacrifice of those who died at Plataea ... The essence of elegy's threnodic function is the celebration of the fallen soldiers' heroic glory and fame” (105).

Such considerations highlight the wealth of associations, not necessarily entirely consonant, that can become attached to a verse form. But Marsus' exploration of his meter in this poem is not limited to any threnodic character that might have attached to it; indeed this poem of two couplets is packed with the programmatic terminology of both elegy and epic: besides *fleo*, *mollis* and *amores* (the title of Ovid's and probably Cornelius Gallus' elegiac collections) on the one hand; and *cano* (cf. Virg. *Aen.* 1.1), *fortis* (cf. Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.50) and *regia bella* (cf. Virg. *Ecl.* 6.3, Ov. *Rem.* 373, etc.) on the other. But meter is quite explicitly an issue here as well, in the *forti pede* that denotes the heroic hexameter in 4, and potentially no less in the *elegis* of line 3.

A full appreciation of the contribution of meter to this composition takes us deeper, though. The gist of the first couplet of the epigram, communicated essentially by Marsus' decision to set Tibullus' death against the simultaneous death of the older Virgil, seems to be the injustice of Tibullus' premature death: Death proves its inequity (*non aequa*) by sending Tibullus in (inappropriate) companionship (*comitem*) with Virgil to Elysium. But that impression of moral imbalance finds its perfect complement in the manipulation of the metrical constituents of the second couplet. Elegy is a metrical scheme in which, as Ovid reminded us earlier, the hexameter and pentameter, an ill-sorted couple, nevertheless achieved union: balance and imbalance are principles to which the elegiac couplet seems instinctively drawn. In the second half of Marsus' poem the achievements of the dead author of the *Aeneid* and the dead elegist are, in metrical terms, wrongly allocated. Line 3, the hexameter, encapsulates the achievement of Tibullus, whilst line 4, the characteristically elegiac pentameter, encompasses Virgil. In a poem determined to make us think formally about epic and elegy, we should spot Marsus' superbly expressive impropriety, which on the metrical plane communicates as clearly as any other element of this composition that the death of Tibullus represents a providential injustice, an affront to the proper balance of things.

This inherent doubleness of the elegiac couplet (cf. Barchiesi 1991, 14–17 on two-faced Janus' satisfactory accommodation in the elegiac *Fasti*) has other sources: the repetitious cola of the pentameter, and the capacity of the second half of the pentameter to echo the first feet of the pentameter, offered similar scope for comparison and contrast (Wills 1996, 432–5). The *reductio* of the latter conceit is to be found in Pentadius' poem-long exercises in late antiquity on phenomena such as Narcissus' reflection (*se puer ipse videt, patrem dum quaerit in amne, / perspicuoque lacu se puer ipse videt*, 259.3–4), where the “interface” of hexameter and pentameter becomes the pool in which the boy's face is reflected (Bailey 1982, nos. 226–7, 259–62). But I choose to end what has been throughout a protreptic not to ignore the creative scope represented by elegy's metrical shape with an example which emphasizes, surely appropriately, the incompatibility of this love match of pentameter and hexameter.

Statius *Silv.* 1.2 also reminds us that love elegy survived the deaths of Tibullus, Propertius and even Ovid. It celebrates the marriage of L. Arruntius Stella, a Domitianic author of love elegy addressed to a *puella* called Asteris (195–9), and the central dynamic of Statius' poem derives from his identification of Asteris with Stella's bride, Violentilla, and thus Stella's marriage with a rejection of his elegiac life and poetry, in favour of more serious pursuits. Meter is twice explicitly addressed in Statius' epithalamium. At 250–55 a special invitation to the wedding is extended to elegiac poets, those *qui nobile gressu / extremo fraudatis opus*, “who deprive the noble composition of its final pace,” an obvious reference to Cupid's light-fingered treatment of Ovid's extended hexameters in *Am.* 1.1, by which Ovid was transformed into an elegist. Statius imagines how keen the great elegists of the past (Philitas, Callimachus, Propertius, Ovid and Tibullus) would have been to celebrate the wedding. The description of the latter two poets at 254–5 shows us how Statius exploits their generic status: on this occasion Ovid would have been *nec tristis in ipsis / ... Tomis*, “not sad even in Tomi”, and Tibullus *dives ... foco lucente*, “rich with his blazing hearth” (cf. Tib. 1.1.5–6) – in other words, each would have shed an essential element of his elegiac persona, Ovid his querulousness and Tibullus his poverty.

This later passage already suggests that Stella's move from the unmarried to wedded state can be expressed in metrical terms. If the elegiac life is a matter of elegiac couplets, Stella's new state requires elegiac poets to abandon their characteristically elegiac stances (Stella himself included): his life now has the responsibility and seriousness associated with the hexameter. In effect Statius here animates the form of his own poem, couched (like the majority of the *Silvae*) in hexameters, generally an unmarked "default" meter, but which in this poem carries a very overt significance of its own, as the metrical blazon of the wedding and normative career to which the formerly feckless elegist is now devoting himself. The hexameter and public life seem particularly closely associated at 174–6, where Venus, as Stella's patron, is persuading Violentilla to respond to Stella's suit. He is a catch, the goddess insists: *hunc et bis senos (sic indulgentia pergat/ praesidis Ausonii) cernes attollere fasces/ ante diem* ("Him will you see raising twice six rods before his time [so may the favour of the Ausonian guardian continue]"). The exquisite delay before *bis senos* finds a noun to qualify encourages this reader, at any rate, to think of consecutive hexametrical lines, which notoriously amount to twelve feet, from which one pilfered leaves the *undeni pedes* (Ov. *Am.* 1.1.30) of elegy (for the use of *senus* to denote the hexameter, see Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.92, *seno pede*). In the event it is political success that Venus is predicting, but the hexameter is precisely the proper vehicle for political success.

But Statius's most amusing play with the metrical shapes of his poem and Stella's elegies comes at the opening of the poem, where Statius introduces the personified Elegy, famously depicted by Ovid (*Am.* 3.1.7–10) as alluring but lame (albeit attractively so) because *pes illi longior alter erat*. Statius' response (1.2.7–10) to Ovid, describing Elegy's arrival at Stella's ceremony in the guise of an extra Muse, unfortunately suffers from textual corruption:

quas inter vultu petulans Elegea propinquat
celsior assueto diuasque hortatur et ambit
alternum ^{†futura†} pedem, decimamque videri
se cupit et medias fallit permixta sorores.

Among [the Muses] pert-faced Elegy draws near,/ taller than usual, and urges the goddesses
and passes from one to another,/ ... every other foot, and wants to be seen/ as the tenth
Muse and mingles unnoticed amid the sisters.

The transmitted *futura* has been emended to *furata*, *fultura* and *suffulta*, but each proposal comes down to essentially the same idea: Elegy must conceal her essential nature, her lameness, if she is to pass unnoticed among the Muses and pass muster at a wedding – the very presence of that elevated company serves to communicate the grandeur of the event and the importance of the happy couple. To this end Elegy walks a little higher and does *something* with the foot which in Ovid's account was shorter than the other. But whether she "conceals" it or bolsters it in some way – *suffulta* yields the superb image of a built-up shoe, but at the cost of some violence to the text, whilst *fultura* produces the bizarre image of Elegy passing from Muse to Muse to lean on them, but I suspect *fultura*, rather than the less vivid *furata*, is correct – Elegy is pretending not to be Elegy, and doing so by dissembling that element of the elegiac metrical form that distinguishes elegy from the higher metrical form it otherwise resembles so closely.

A tidy play on Ovid's play on the pentameter ("a verse which does not contain five of anything," we recall), and a concluding reminder that the mismatch of verses within the elegiac couplet was always capable of enshrining the dubious morals of the poetry it carried. But perhaps the more important implication of Stella's un-elegiac wedding is the extent to which *elegi* are characterized by their non-identity with continuous hexameters. In this they are not entirely different from other Roman verse forms: hendecasyllables and iambic trimeters were also intensely aware of the normative metrical shape represented by the dactylic hexameter. But in elegy that polarity was hard-wired into a metrical system which shackled hexameter and pentameter together, giving their partnership the singular dynamic that comes from having a lot in common as well as irreconcilable differences. That does sound a good vehicle for Love Elegy.

FURTHER READING

The most accessible introduction to Roman meter in general is Raven 1965, republished by Bristol Classical Press in 1998. The opening remarks of his preface bear repeating: "The quantitative metres of the ancient Greek and Latin languages are basically by no means hard to understand; but students have long been accustomed to recoil from any study of them with quite unjustifiable alarm." Things haven't got any better in the last fifty years, but Raven is a thoroughly undaunting attempt to overcome the taboo. For Greek meter, from which almost all Roman metrical forms are derived, the classic account is Maas 1962 (Hugh Lloyd-Jones' translation of the German original). Maas is a masterpiece of compression; West 1982 goes into detail, and sets the metrical forms in a historical framework. But for beginners Raven 1962 or West 1987 (a simplified version of West 1982) are more appropriate. Halporn, Ostwald and Rosenmeyer 1963 covers both Greek and Latin in a highly accessible way.

For elegiac meter in particular, Platnauer 1951 offers a comprehensive account partly designed for students composing elegiac verse: but it offers a convenient shortcut to an informed familiarity with metrical convention. Fussell 1979 is concerned with English-language poetry, and betrays at times an unfortunate prejudice against classical meter, of which his understanding is limited. But it is, nevertheless, a stimulating promotion of a neglected area of literary criticism, and very suggestive of the diverse ways in which meter contributes to the poetic creation. The seminal account of the expressive resources of Latin poetry remains Wilkinson 1963, and rhythm is the subject of Part II (pp. 89–164). His Pulse-Accent Theory, the idea that much of the communicative power of Latin meter arises from a tension between rhythmical beat and natural word stress, is influential, but more popular in English-speaking circles than French or Italian, to whom Wilkinson's assumptions seem less self-evident. Morgan 2010 is an attempt to increase interest in one particular aspect of Latin metrical usage, the ethos or associations which every metrical form potentially brings to the poetry couched in it, and which are available for any poet to exploit. Elegiacs are one of the forms considered.

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CHAPTER 14

The Elegiac Book: Patterns and Problems

S. J. Heyworth

A significant part of the Hellenistic heritage of the Latin poets of the first century BCE was a concern for the arrangement of their poems in books. There are clear traces of this in Catullus, when poems 1 and 22 show an interest in publication, for example, or the paired kiss poems 5 and 7 are pointedly separated. In Horace's *Satires* and Vergil's *Eclogues* we have two fully realized books, transmitted with the poems in the artful order in which they were published by their authors. Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid followed the fashion in their own creative ways, and there are many sophisticated analyses of the books they produced. However, there are problems that have to be faced too: often, as we shall see, the number of poems is in doubt, and there are unavoidable questions of authenticity and disruption.

Transmission, Poem Division, Numeration

Our knowledge of ancient texts depends on chains of transmission that are often tenuous. This is a particularly significant factor for the reader of Latin elegy. In the case of Tibullus we have no manuscripts for the whole corpus older than the late 14th century (similarly with Catullus); no Propertian manuscripts are earlier than the 12th century, none for the *Amores* earlier than the 9th. In general terms the later the manuscript, the more corrupt it is likely to be, because each intervening copy will produce errors of its own, and as centuries pass there is more chance of decay and of damage, and a greater likelihood that the conventions of script and abbreviation will be misunderstood by a copyist. With Gallus the issue is not one of date, for his verses survive in what is apparently the oldest extant Latin manuscript; but this contains merely six complete and four fragmentary lines, to go with the single pentameter cited by the geographical writer

Vibius Sequester. Even the Gallus fragment, almost certainly written in the author's lifetime, contains an error (*erit* for *eris* in *cum tu / maxima Romanae pars eris historiae* [“when you will be the greatest part of the Rome's story”] at *FRP* 145.3).

Any text of these poets has to be read with caution, and with full awareness of the information on manuscripts and conjectures presented in the apparatus criticus, and of the scholarly debates that underpin what editors place there. A transcription of the oldest manuscript would in each case be full of nonsense and of readings that break the norms of metre, diction and usage for poets of the Augustan period. Modern editions therefore attempt to correct what has been transmitted, and they necessarily contain many speculative conjectures, as well as choosing between the variants offered by the manuscript tradition at each point. There is uncertainty about the correct words, but also about where there may be gaps in the text or extraneous couplets added by readers and scribes – and also about where poems should begin and end.

Love elegy in the form on which this book concentrates was published as a sequence of poems within a single roll. This requires conventions for the separation of poems, for the marking of a beginning or an end. The opening chapter of Hutchinson (2008) has a very useful survey of practices in Alexandria and Rome, touching on important examples such as the Milan papyrus of Posidippus (6–7); this has titles for groups of epigrams, and paragraphoi, short horizontal lines extending into the left hand margin to separate individual poems. The survey stresses the fact that, as well as authorial books, we have in some Greek papyri personal selections of related items, sometimes by different authors. A point not brought out by Hutchinson is that divisions made merely by paragraphoi will very easily disappear in the course of transmission, just as happens when the same technique is used to separate the speakers in Greek drama.

In a medieval manuscript the classic format for division of poems is with an “interstice” (a gap) of one or more verses, which in a finished copy then contains either a title, or, in the case of a major division (between books, or authors), an *explicit* and an *incipit*. The new poem opens with an initial capital larger than the regular capitals with which each line begins, frequently embellished or at least different in colour, and sometimes combined with an illumination. In the majority of cases the titles in manuscripts of classical Latin clearly do not go back to the author (as might be the case with Posidippus, e.g.; cf. also Martial 13.3.7, 14.2.3–4); this seems always to be the case with elegy. Interstices may function as dividers of poems even in the absence of a title. More tenuous is what we find in N, the oldest manuscript of Propertius (Wolfenbüttel Gud. 224): no title, no interstice, merely a large, painted initial. Such a detail could easily be missed by a careless copyist; and if the initial letters are never painted, the divisions might well disappear when the manuscript is copied. Even less obtrusive are the places where we find no interstice and no large initial, but merely some indication in the margin: this is especially likely to occur of course when the division is due to a later reader. The marginal addition might be a title, or an explicit statement that a new poem begins, but is more often some sort of *nota* (e.g. the medieval models for ¶ or §).

When signs of separation are so insubstantial, it is easy for them to be lost between one manuscript and the next. Moreover, divisions between poems are treated by scribes rather as punctuation is: some effort may go into reproducing the details of the exemplar, but carelessness over these is far commoner than it is over verbal form. Even more significant is that the earlier we look in medieval traditions, the less complete the

separation of poems. There are so many errors of commission and omission in this area that by far the safest conclusion is that divisions between poems, though not between books, were lost entirely in the cases of Horace's *Odes*, Catullus' *corpus*, and the three collections of love elegy, Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid's *Amores*, as well as other books, such as the *Tristia*. The division of each book into separate poems depends on the suggestions made by readers in the middle ages and the centuries since. In no case does the conventional numeration have particular authority (though it seems to be accurate in the case of Tibullus 1 and 2); editors and other readers have to use their own judgement. A helpful approach is through the criteria that Murgia (2000, 171; and 239–41) gives for establishing a separation between poems: "a good ending"; "a good beginning"; and a break "marked by a change in sequence". The poems resulting from division should be seen to have unity, whether in structure, verbal patterning, coherence of thought, or similarity to other recognized unitary poems. Otherwise, one may be dealing with fragments. Murgia neatly acknowledges these additional complexities in his discussion of Propertius 2.1 (170–1), where internal divisions are shown to be partial in the light of the overarching address to Maecenas. Change or continuity of addressee makes an obvious contribution to such debates, and in some collections (Catullus's polymetrics and the *Odes*) change of metre will be decisive; but in elegiac books the metre never changes, and the *puella* is a repeated addressee.

We should be very cautious in making claims about the architecture of a poetic book to the extent that they depend upon the numbering of poems within the collection. In Horace's *Epodes* critics (e.g. Lyne [2007] 339–40) have made something of the continuation of the book after the tenth poem: the two influential volumes of the 30s, the first book of Satires and Vergil's *Eclogues*, each have ten poems, and it is tempting to think that this became a default number for subsequent volumes, of which Tibullus 1 is a strong and early example. The *Epodes*, according to the standard count, begin with ten poems in the same metre. That this is the correct count is not really in doubt, given the decisive endings, the changes of addressee, and the clear breaks in subject matter; but even here old manuscripts have added breaks in two of the longer poems, at 2.23 and 5.31. Poem 11 accompanies the use of a new metre with reflections on genre and content; and observation about the continuation of the book is present also in poem 14, the point at which Horace goes beyond the number of poems in one of his main models, the *Iambi* of Callimachus, which had 13 "iambic" poems (though apparently with an appendix of a further four poems in lyric metres). Readers might be tempted to see something similar happening in *Tristia* 1, where the standard numeration reaches 11, but the thoughtful Teubner edition by Hall (1995) treats as two poems what the traditional numeration unifies in 1.5 and 1.9 (with good reason in each case).

The desire to have books made up of repeated numbers of poems, particularly multiples of five, has had effects on the editing of Ovid's *Amores* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* too. In the latter collection, Froesch (1968) suggested transposition of 2.11 after 3.4 to improve the transmitted numbers 10, 11, 9 to an even 10, 10, 10, and subsequent editors have followed him. The traditional numeration for the *Amores* makes a balanced sequence: 15, 19, 15. However, the criteria that lead critics to treat some material as single poems rather than a pair argue for the unity also of 2.2–3, both addressed to the eunuch who stands in the way of a planned seduction (McKeown [1998] 28–9). By bracketing the *Somnium* (3.5) as unOvidian and accepting the divisions proposed by

Müller at 2.9.25 and 3.11.32 as well as the canonical one between 2.2 and 3, Kenney secures an even neater pattern, which he is reluctant to attribute to chance (1961, x): 15, 20, 15. Of course it is not due to chance, but to his belief that Ovid used multiples of five. The correctness of the pattern depends on the correctness of at least four separate and difficult textual decisions. If we could be confident that Ovid shared the modern aesthetic, it would give us a helpful tool in making such judgements. However, modern numeration gives the count in each book some prominence, but there is no evidence in ancient citations that a similar system obtained in antiquity. There are securely attested books with ten poems, but no other number is treated with manifest reverence. Other aspects of design deserve more attention.

Gallus, Tibullus and Ovid's *Amores*: Oddities and Aesthetics

The papyrus found in the far south of Egypt with fragments of ten lines including a reference to Lycoris is our oldest evidence for the presentation of Latin elegy (it probably belongs to the 20s BCE), but the discovery created as many problems as it solved, not least through the separation of the groups of lines with interstices and large “H” marks. In the latest commentary on the Gallus papyrus (*FRP* 145), Hollis (2007) lists four proposed explanations: (a) the spacing is to be ignored, and the verses read as continuous; (b) the groups of lines are part of an amoebae exchange; (c) the two complete quatrains are epigrams; (d) the lines are selected portions of longer poems. Of these (a) is *prima facie* improbable, and all the more so when we observe the extraordinary variety of material it implies for a single poem. Against (b), and (c) too, is the way in which Vergil and the elegists echo verses 6–9 in particular as if they were a prominent programmatic statement, not just one in a sequence of responding quatrains or miscellaneous epigrams. It is true that 2–5 could constitute an epigram, but this is the case with portions of many an elegy, and especially those that might attract an anthologist. But if theory (c) is right we are left to conclude that epigrams made up a significant part of the work of the first “elegist”, as Gallus has been reckoned in the light of Ovid’s repeated list of the writers of the genre. Alternatively we may accept (d) and deduce that even in grandly written contemporary rolls the work of the elegists could be excerpted and reduced to fragments.

As a book Tibullus 1 is a comparatively straightforward imitation of the 10-poem model; the complexity lies in the interweaving of themes and diction within and between poems. Late humanistic sources claim that 1.10 was the start of the second book in some old manuscripts, but this seems to originate in a 15th-century copy, now Wolfenbüttel Aug.82.6 (Heyworth [1995a] 128–9). Modern editors rightly give no weight to this, and there are no debates about the division of the book into its constituent poems. Discussion of the book as a book can focus on aesthetic issues. The structure is a basically simple one. Tibullus’s love for Delia dominates poems 1–6, but the sequence is broken by 1.4, a dialogue with the god Priapus, who here plays the part of a teacher of love. Moreover, the first poem is itself not primarily devoted to Delia: there is a long initial account of the modest self-sufficiency the poet presents as his ideal in contrast to the

wealth of others (the opening phrase is *Divitias alius*), and Delia's name appears first in verse 57 (out of 78), after the poet's patron Messalla (verse 53). The poems dedicated to Delia can thus be seen as the two pairs 2 and 3, 5 and 6, with a third pair (8, 9) on the complex relationships of a male beloved, Marathus: 1.4 has foreshadowed this in the homoerotic precepts of Priapus, and the name of Marathus himself is introduced in the final four lines. The presence of Messalla in 1.1 initiates a different sequence: he will reappear briefly in 3 and 5, and at length in 7, a birthday poem celebrating his military and administrative successes. The book is rounded off with a final poem on the delights of a rural life blessed with peace and love.

Book 2 is transmitted as 6 poems, 432 lines, far shorter than the other extant books of elegies, and thus raises an immediate question: is it complete? In the introduction to their commentaries both Murgatroyd (1994) and Maltby (2002) make cases for the elegant roundedness of the book and the whole collection. But more persuasive to my mind is the argument of Reeve (1984) that not even 2.6 is complete: the final verses transmitted, 45–54, describe the harm the *lena* does to his relationship with Nemesis and his habitual cursing of her. There is no sense of resolution, no return to the future possibilities for the poet or his main addressee. Neither the anaphora that introduces the last four couplets (*saepe ... saepe ... tunc ... tunc ...*) nor the sense of repetition brought by *saepe* and reprised by *tunc* are at all typical of elegiac endings. It remains an open question whether the truncated book was left so by Tibullus at his premature death, or whether the ending of 2.6 has been lost in transmission, perhaps along with several other poems. Given the orderliness of what is preserved and the brevity of the “book”, there seems a fair chance that the end has indeed been lost.

One complication is that another “book” of nearly 700 lines follows in the manuscripts: “Tibullus” 3 is not now attributed to the author of 1–2, and it is, as we shall see, an odd collection in itself, but the opening verses function well as the start of their poem and the sequence:

Martis Romani festae venere kalendae –
 exoriens nostris hic fuit annus avis –
 et vaga nunc crebra discurrunt undique pompa
 perque vias urbis munera perque domos:
 dicite, Pierides, quonam donetur honore
 seu mea, seu fallor, cara Neaera tamen.
 “carmine formosae, pretio capiuntur avarae.
 gaudeat, ut digna est, versibus illa tuis. ...”

The festive Kalends of Roman Mars has come — this was the dawn of the year for our ancestors — and gifts now run wandering in crowded throngs through the streets of the city and the houses: say, Muses, what honor is to be bestowed on Neaera, my Neaera, or if I'm mistaken, yet dear Neaera. “Beautiful girls are won with song, greedy ones with money. Let her rejoice in your verses, as she deserves. ...”

(all translations are my own)

This is a strong opening: verse 6 introduces us to the *puella*, beloved but not yet won by the speaker, but the poem begins from the traditional start of the Roman

calendar, the Matronalia on 1st March, when wives were traditionally given gifts, and addresses the Muses, asking for their words in approaching Neaera, and reflecting on the ideal power of song. There is no reason to think that preceding verses have been lost in transmission. It follows that any loss of material from the end of book 2 is likely to have happened before the move from papyrus roll to parchment codex: for though the material in book 3 is not by Tibullus, the combination with his poetry is not arbitrary, since his patron Messalla re-appears in two poems here. The collection comprises (a) 6 poems (145 elegiac couplets) on the love of Lygdamus for Neaera; (b) 3.7: 211 hexameters in praise of Messalla; (c) 3.8–18: elegiac poems of between 4 and 26 verses on Sulpicia (with whose name the sequence opens) and her beloved Cerinthus (3.18 is also transmitted after 3.6 in most manuscripts, a fact which may suggest the slightly haphazard nature of the accumulation in this collection); and (d) 3.19–20: poems of 12 and 2 couplets spoken by a male lover, identified at 3.19.13 as Tibullus. Among this material there are places that have a genetic relationship with later passages of Ovid (in particular 3.5.18 is identical with *Tristia* 4.10.6: *cum cecidit fato consul uterque pari*, “when both consuls fell to the same fate”), and most of those who have considered the matter conclude that the “Tibullian” passages are dependent, and that they therefore do not belong to the era of Messalla and Tibullus (so e.g. Lyne [2007] 341–2); this notion is taken furthest by Holzberg [1999], who argues that the collection was composed a century later to be read as a book written by the young Tibullus. However, in no case does it seem clear that the “Tibullian” passage must allude to Ovid rather than the other way round; we should also think of shared models. And despite the presence of an apparently pseudo-Tibullian poem (3.19), the composition of a miscellany of poetry pretending to belong to Messalla’s circle seems less likely than the gathering together of some material that is related through the patron to the poet who wrote books 1 and 2.

The previous section considered the ways in which editors have dealt with the design of Ovid’s *Amores*. Here I shall use the collection to explore some of the effects of sequence that are not reliant on counting and to show how Murgia’s criteria for separating poems can be seen to work in a run of poems that is not itself controversial. The first poem ends with a return to the themes of the opening (on which, see below): the poet welcomes the Muse of Elegy, measured out 11 feet at a time, and says farewell to the wars which he was planning to sing of in verse 1. There is then a marked change of sequence – at the start of 1.2 he does not know he is in love, an effect that would be obvious within the context of 1.1. The discomfort of a sleepless night is an arresting beginning; we are then led through Ovid’s realization that he is in love and must submit to Cupid on to the fantasy of Cupid’s triumph and the mischievous closing request that the boy-god imitate the clemency of his cousin Caesar. *Iusta precor* (“I pray for what is just”) makes a striking start to the next poem; but it could seem a continuation of 1.2, until we find that this prayer is directed to Cytherea (1.3.4) and the poem as a whole to an unnamed girl. The generalities of 1.3 reach a climax with the prediction of world-wide fame in the final couplet; 1.4.1 *Vir tuus est epulas nobis aditurus easdem* (“Your husband is going to be at the same party as us”) creates a quite distinct situation for the next poem to explore. It ends with an instruction not on the party, but for the next day, the regular change of direction in the final

couplet; 1.5 immediately sets itself up in contrast – an account of a past event in a bedroom in the heat of the day (1.5.1, 25–6):

Aestus erat, **mediam** que **dies** exegerat horam; ...
cetera quis nescit? lassiquevimus ambo. 25
proveniant **medii** sic mihi saepe **dies!**

It was sweltering, and the day had passed the hour of noon; ... Who does not know the rest (*i.e.* sex)? We tired each other out and slept. May my noontimes often turn out so.

medii ... *dies* encloses the poem with a classic echo of the start; but already in the hexameter *cetera quis nescit* marks the signing off, and the post-coital snooze functions as a closural allusion. Then 1.6 opens with an equally appropriate address: *Janitor ... pande forem* (“Doorman, ... open the door”), and so begins a poem set outside and at night.

In what follows there are powerful effects won by juxtapositions, such as that between 2.4.48 *in has omnes ambitiosus amor* (“my love has designs on all of these girls”) and 2.5.1 *Nullus amor tanti est* (“No love is worth so much”), to introduce a poem on possessive jealousy to follow that on promiscuous desire, or the pair 2.13 and 14, both on Corinna’s abortion, the former written to bring out the dramatic urgency of her condition and dominated by prayers to female deities (7–26), whereas in the latter the danger is past and there is room for longer reflection, exploring the anger mentioned in 2.13.4 as banished by fear, comparing abortion to the murder of children and fantasizing about the end of humanity if all mothers behaved so. Each of the pair marks its end with a change of addressee in the final couplet and a closural *satis* in the final line. Another diptych comprises 2.7, where the poet reacts with angry horror to the accusation that he has been having sex with Cypassis, the slave who dresses his mistress’s hair, and 2.8, in which he asks Cypassis how Corinna found out, and demands that she come round this afternoon – or he’ll tell all. But part of the force of 2.7 comes from its position after 2.4 which the poet begins with the solemn announcement “Non ego mendosos ausim defendere mores/falsaque pro vitii arma movere meis” (“I would not dare to defend improper behavior or go to war for my faults”). Such delights may extend across book divisions, as when the request in 2.19 that the girl’s husband keep a closer watch on her if Ovid is not to grow bored and lose interest is followed up in 3.4 by a claim that the *vir*, in keeping a close guard, is wasting his effort and just making the girl more attractive.

Propertius: Patterns, Problems, Programmes

In every book of Propertius the number of poems is in doubt. In the cases of books 3 and 4, though the manuscripts make many errors of omission (not even marginal indications of division at 4.10.1 or 11.1 in the oldest codex N, e.g.) and commission (divisions marked in a number of manuscripts at 3.11.17, 3.15.11, 4.6.11, e.g.), editorial uncertainty is limited to a single sequence, whether “3.24–5” is a single poem (the current consensus) and whether the 150 lines of “4.1” are one poem, divided between two speakers, or two poems, separate but related in the way that adjacent poems regularly are in these books. Division of 4.1 gives us a simple alternation of aetiological (4.1A, 2, 4, 6) and non-aetiological poems (4.1B, 3, 5, 7), which is broken only by Cynthia’s compelling

presence in 8. The Cynthia pair (7-8) is then matched by an aetiological pair (9-10), and the poet ends (n.b. *Desine* ["cease"], 4.11.1) with a non-aetiological poem.

Book 1 features a very obvious piece of patterning: two poems to Tullus, 1.6, which rejects his invitation to go east in the service of Roman imperialism, and 1.14, which contrasts his wealth and *otium* with the poet's life of love, surround two pairs: 1.7 and 1.9 are both addressed to Ponticus, an epic poet who at first disdains Propertius and then falls in love, as the elegist has predicted; 1.10 and 1.13 are likewise directed to Gallus, a lover and generally taken to be the elegist, though that is left implicit. In the middle of these pairs we have sequences of 46 verses (1.8) and 50 (1.11-12). In 1.8 the poet first tries to persuade Cynthia not to head off abroad with a Roman magistrate, and then from verse 27 suddenly starts to celebrate her decision not to go; in 1.11 he regrets that she is in Baiae; and in 1.12 asserts that though she is distant from him yet he will always love her. Though the numeration treats these differently, the patterning gives us a good reason to divide both or to unite both (but 1.11-12 is hardly a unit: Heyworth [2007a] 37-8). Some (notably Camps [1961] 10-11; Skutsch [1963]; Courtney [1968]) have tried to extend the pattern to include at least 1-5 and 15-19. Though those blocks of five poems are of similar lengths and contain interconnected sequences of poems (see e.g. Solmsen [1962] on 16-18), no clear criteria (such as the addressee) establish a pattern. Moreover, the suggested designs serve only to isolate the concluding poems 20-2, and thus do nothing for the integration of the book as a unit (so Hutchinson [1984] 99).

As we have seen, the two Ponticus poems, and 1.8 A and B develop narratives. Something similar can be found in the contribution of 1.11-12 to the book as a whole. After the threatened departures of 6 and 8 the first break between the two lovers comes when Cynthia goes to Baiae in 1.11. Near its end (29, *litora quae fuerunt castis inimica puellis*), this poem has an important echo of 1.1.5, where *Amor* is said to have turned the poet against *castas puellas* (apparently meaning the Muses): Cynthia's willingness to listen to the poet, a change effected by 1.1, is now overturned by her neglectful absence in Baiae. The next poem continues this return to motifs from 1.1: Batstone (1992, 295-6) notes that the lonely nights of 1.12.13 echo those of 1.1.33, and the idea of transferring affection in 1.12.17 picks up from 1.1.36. In 1.12.6, *Cynthia nec nostra dulcis in aure sonat*, we should be alert to the echo of the book's first word and the consequent sense "nor does [the book] *Cynthia* sound sweet in my ear", especially as he later says *cogor et ipse meis auribus esse gravis* ("I am compelled to be heavy in my own ears," 14). Cynthia's absence is corrupting his style, it seems: *amores* turn to *tristia*, and he starts to describe epic journeys. Propertius rejects criticisms that love is leading him into *desidia*, but despite the change in circumstances, he ends with a ringing statement of his determination to remain true to Cynthia and his genre. This pair of poems is thus a small illustration of how Propertius responds to the difficulty of keeping his account of a love affair going by introducing into his books a sense of narrative progress: he changes direction, reprises material, teases the reader with false closure, and then begins again, and again. Acknowledgement of repetition is particularly striking in the opening verse of book 2:

Quaeritis unde mihi totiens scribantur amores,

You ask how I come to write so often of my love affairs.

The portion of the Propertian corpus that begins so has been the most controversial part of Latin elegy. However, it is now widely agreed that what is known as Book 2 was originally two books, as was first argued by Lachmann. The reasons for this conclusion are its inordinate length, over 300 lines more than any other Augustan poetry book, and the reference at 2.13.25 to a corpus of three books, which makes little sense in a volume other than the third. Despite the general agreement, there has also been one sustained attack on the theory (Butrica [1996]). The thesis of Butrica's paper is clearly set out at the start (88–9): "Propertius' four books circulated as two works, a one book collection called *Cynthia*, now known as Book 1, and a three-book collection comprising Books 2–4, probably called *Amores*." The issue of length he deals with by supposing that book 2 has been increased by interpolation. As he regards 2 as conjoined with 3 and 4 in a *tribiblos*, there must be a strong presumption that it originally matched their length (Book 3: 990 verses; 4: 952). But what is proposed, in order to reduce 1362 verses to these norms, requires the cutting out of not just 370 lines, but rather more, because (as the later discussion acknowledges) the text suffers also from lacunae.

Further investigation of the question will seek to establish historical truth about book 2, but it may also prevent the distorted interpretation of the text that results from reading Book 1 as separate from what follows. The title *Monobiblos* found in some of the manuscripts was drawn (probably by the 13th-century French writer Richard de Fournival) from its occurrence as the *titulus* at Martial 14.189, where the reference is to a particular bookseller's edition of Propertius, the contents of which are unknown to us, but which was contained in a single roll rather than the usual multiple set; as Butrica showed (1996, 91), *monobiblos* was never an author's title for his book but rather a term for "a work contained in one roll and complete in itself" or "a book in which a single scroll contains the entire work", i.e. not part of a sequence or collection. Despite this some of those writing on Propertius have continued to use the term "Monobiblos" as if it were the title of Book 1 and without apparently realizing that in doing so they are accepting a vision of the poet's intention that unifies Books 2–4 as something separate from 1.

Propertius himself refers to his first book as *Cynthia*, and talks about it as issued separately (2.24.2). However, Ovid clearly did not think of it as complete in itself: when he lists the authors best avoided by the lover who wishes to escape from an affair (*Rem.* 759–66), the elegists dominate the list (763–6):

carmina quis potuit tuto legisse Tibulli,
 vel tua, **cuius opus Cynthia sola fuit?**
 quis poterit lecto durus discedere Gallo?
 et mea nescioquid carmina tale sonant.

Who could safely read the poems of Tibullus, or yours, **whose work was Cynthia alone?**
Who could walk away hard-hearted after reading Gallus? My poems too have something of
that sound.

This is a vital bit of evidence: Ovid was an intimate of Propertius (*Trist.* 4.10.45–6), and a close imitator. How could he possibly have written that *Cynthia* was the lone *opus* of Propertius, if Propertius also produced a three-volume *Amores*? The point cannot be avoided by supposing that the hypothetical *monobiblos* actually had another title, for

Cynthia becomes its identifying mark as the first word. There is a firm implication that whatever books Propertius issued were considered by Ovid part of the same multi-volume work, identifiable by its subject matter and first word as the *Cynthia*.

But even before the *Remedia* there is evidence that shows Book 1 cannot be a *monobiblos*. We have already seen how our book 2 begins by addressing readers who already know the poet as producer of love poetry: *totiens* implies a multiplicity of works on this theme. Then 2.2.1–2 present him as temporarily free from love:

Liber eram et vacuo meditabar vivere lecto,
at me composita pace fefellit Amor.

I was free and thinking of life in an empty bed; but Love, who had agreed a peace, tricked me.

but this is clearly to be read as a change from his earlier captivity under the control of Cynthia and Amor (esp. 1.1.1–4). Love has broken the peace treaty he granted as conqueror in Book 1. Most striking of all in this sequence is the passage Propertius addresses to himself at the start of 2.3:

Qui nullam tibi dicebas iam posse nocere,
haesisti; cecidit spiritus ille tuus.
vix unum potes, infelix, requiescere mensem,
et turpis de te iam liber alter erit.

You who were saying that no woman could any longer hurt you have stuck; that spirit of yours has drooped. Scarcely a single month can you rest, poor soul, and **now there will be another shameful book about you.**

The poet will have a second disgraceful book about him: the poem is clearly marked as belonging to the second book in a sequence.

The whole construction of our Books 2 and 3 assumes a continuation of what Book 1 has started. From 2.1.1–16 on there is repeated emphasis on how the poet continues to deal with his one love. As the text is transmitted, he does not name her until the opening line of poem 2.5: the persistent naming of Cynthia in Book 1 enables him to let the reader assume the identity of the *puella* who inspires him (2.1.4) and is his fate (2.1.78). Towards the close of Book 3 echoes of key poems from Book 1 mark the end of the cycle: the poet finally does set out for Athens (3.21; cf. 1.6), and once more addresses his long absent friend Tullus (3.22; cf. 1.1, 6, 14, 22). Finally in 3.24–5 he says farewell to Cynthia. Back at 1.1.19–26 friends and witches had been summoned to aid him; he marks the enclosure of Books 1–3 by recalling this at 3.24.9–10:

quod mihi non patrii poterant avertere amici,
eludere aut vasto Thessala saga mari.

Family friends could not save me from this, or a Thessalian witch wash it away in the vast ocean.

When the details of its narrative are so obviously being resumed later on, Book 1 cannot have been regarded by the poet as “complete in itself”, as essentially separate from what follows in the way that the term *monobiblos* implies. Each original book had its unity, but so did the collection that grew book by book.

There remain questions about the shape of the books that were combined into our “Book 2”, and where the original division came. Lachmann’s notion (reprinted in Skutsch [1975]) was that 2.10 was the beginning of the third book. However, it is now seen that the metapoetic elements in 2.10 belong at the end of a book, not the beginning; in addition 2.13 has been seen to have programmatic functions. Thus more recent scholars have argued for division before 2.12 (Lyne [2007] 184–210, 227–50); Murgia [2000]; Fedeli [2005] 21–35) or 2.13 (Heyworth [1995b]; Günther [1997] 6–14). Deciding how to edit this sequence involves engaging with questions about the nature of elegiac poems and epigrams, about how ancient poems and books begin and end. In my introductory sentences on poem 2.10, I have argued the case for thinking that *sed tempus lustrare aliis Helicon choreis* (1: “but it is time to traverse Helicon with other dances”) and *scripta puella mea est* (8: “my girl is written”) belong not just near the end but in the final poem of the original roll (Heyworth 2007a). Lyne’s analysis takes that point and argues that 2.11 should be attached at the end (2007); but (as Fedeli emphasizes) the unmarked change of address from Caesar to Cynthia makes this impossible. Murgia and Fedeli take 2.11 as a closing epigram and relate it to the two ten-verse poems at the end of Book 1. However, for the analogy to work, 2.11 would have to be epigrammatic in form as well as length; and in content it would have to fit outside the main thrust of the text in the same way as Ovid’s epigram before *Amores* 1 does:

Qui modo Nasonis fueramus quinque libelli,
tres sumus; hoc illi praetulit auctor opus.
ut iam nulla tibi nos sit legisse voluptas,
at levior demptis poena duobus erit.

We who had recently been five books by Naso are become three; the author has preferred this work to that. Though there now be no pleasure for you in reading us, yet the pain will be lighter as two have been taken away.

Because this announces itself as speaking with the voice of the collected books and reflects on the form of the whole, it does not remove the delightful shock of the word *Arma* with which the first book is still seen to open. Likewise the fact that the epigram is in elegiac couplets does not spoil the play with epic composition in the opening lines (*Am.* 1.1.1–4):

Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conveniente modis.
par erat inferior versus; risisse Cupido
dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem.

Arms in a serious meter and violent warfare I was preparing to describe, the material matching the rhythm. The second verse was equal in length; Cupid is said to have laughed and stolen away a single foot.

Compare the three couplets (*Tristia* 1.7.35–40) Ovid invites us to place before the *Metamorphoses*. Propertius 2.11 is not a prologue nor similarly separable. There are certainly elements in 2.11 that would fit in a closing poem – the initial refusal to write about Cynthia and the emphasis on death thereafter. Of course references to death and memorialization play on the epigrammatic tradition, but these are also topics that

Propertius deals with in poems of greater length, and 2.11 does not have the focus one would expect in an epigram. Rather we must contrast this piece with the short poems at the end of book 1: 1.21, spoken by a man who is dead but unburied, sets itself within the tradition of the sepulchral epigram; 1.22 functions as a *sphragis*, while also displaying sepulchral elements. Each of these poems has a focus provided by the opening couplet: 1.21.1–2 establishes the essential circumstances (death in warfare in Etruria), and 1.22.1–2 poses the basic question about Propertius' familial identity that the remaining lines answer. It seems reasonable then that the monograph on the influence of Greek epigram on Propertius (Schulz-Vanheyden 1969), so detailed in its discussion of 1.21 and 22, has nothing to say on 2.11: it has no identifiable models in the epigrammatic *corpus*.

What is the alternative then? The six lines of 2.11 are a fragment of a larger poem. If this is a fragment, it is easy to imagine that it is misplaced, and that it originally stood before 2.10: 2.9.49–52 are acknowledged to be a fragment, and the initial *sed* is a good reason for thinking that 2.10.1 is not the beginning of its poem. There is thus plenty of room for these lines to have stood in a context that was closural within their book but before the final move that announces Propertius' intended new topic. The interplay between *scribant de te alii* ("others may write about you") and *scripta puella mea est* ("since my girl is written") will still function, and so will the responsion with 2.1. It is 2.10 that belongs outside the main structure of the Cynthia narrative, for it is 2.10 that marks (quite fallaciously) the completion of Cynthia poetry and the future appearance of a new kind of Propertian poetry.

Murgia's case for taking 2.12 as the start of Book 2B depends upon his argument that 2.12–13 actually make up a single poem. However, 2.12 is famous for its precise structure, with three pairs of couplets applauding the artistic depiction of Amor (a boy, winged, and with arrows), and three then concerned with Propertius himself, applying the allegory, remonstrating with the god, and implicitly contrasting with the inaccuracy of the painter his unique skill in vivifying his love. When such a clear and closed pattern is followed by a verse that speaks of Persian arrows, we have just the kind of marker of division that Murgia rightly seeks elsewhere. The break is confirmed by a change from second person to third of Amor and by the past tense (*fixit*) in 2.13.2. There are moreover specific reasons for identifying this opening couplet of 2.13 as the start of the book. Most significantly, it is here that Propertius responds to his promise in 2.10 to write *bella* and so to mark the Eastern campaigns of Augustus: Amor, a greater god, has forbidden him to abandon his slender Muses (2.13.4). But the poem begins with words that seem to be fulfilling the promise precisely:

Non tot Achaemeniis armatur +etrusca+ sagittis
spicula quot nostro pectore fixit Amor.

Not with so many Persian shafts is [*lost place name*] armed
as arrows have been fixed in my breast by Love.

The hexameter offers military vocabulary and an evocation of empire-building; but then the movement to *Amor* in the pentameter works like Cupid's theft in Ovid, *Amores* 1.1.1–4: an epic opening is turned to elegy by the intrusion of Love and his arrows. The sense of surprise depends on the couplet's being the first of its book. There is far less programmatic force in 2.12, despite some links with 1.1 (Lyne [2007])

184–210). If “Book 2” were a portion of the text transmitted in good order, that should worry us; but 2.12 may well have emigrated from an unidentifiable position within either 2A or 2B. If 2.13 stood at the beginning of Propertius’s original third book, its opening hexameter offered epic diction and distant place names before the pentameter restored elegiac order and the dominance of Love.

Such speculations may illustrate how the segmentation and ordering of Latin elegy provides meaning and complexity, but they need always to be carefully based on observation of other books and poems and an understanding of how unreliable the evidence of the manuscripts is. In analysing the structure of an ancient book we must rely on basic principles, thoughtfully applied, and not simply follow the numeration of our editions as if that were a thing of authority and not historical accident.

FURTHER READING

The first resource on the transmission of most Classical Latin authors remains Reynolds (1983). We also have a thorough investigation of the Propertian tradition (Butrica 1984); there is nothing comparable for Tibullus or the *Amores*, but recent editions have helpful synopses and bibliography (Luck 1998, Maltby 2002: 21–3; McKeown 1987: 124–8, Ramirez de Verger 2006). On the separation of poems in books, see Damon (1990), Heyworth (1995a, b), Murgia (2000), Hutchinson (2008, 1–25).

In the 1960s and 1970s there was a fashion for articles that took an architectural approach to the design of Latin poetic books, especially Propertius: Skutsch 1963, Courtney 1968, Hering 1973, Woolley 1967, Nethercut 1968, more recently Dion 1997; on Ovid, see Davis 1977; on Tibullus, Littlewood 1970, Dettmer 1980, 1983. For reasons that have been explained above, such analyses are constructed on uncertain ground; and in terms of the aesthetics of the papyrus roll more is to be gained from work that explores the delights of sequential and thematic reading, e.g. on Propertius, Courtney 1970, Jacobson 1976, Putnam 1980, Petersmann 1980, Hutchinson 1984, Butrica 1996: 98–153; on Tibullus, Powell 1974, Leach 1980, Mutschler 1985; on Ovid, Holzberg 1997. Nethercut 1983 includes a good survey of developments in this aspect of Propertian scholarship (1817–36). Recent commentaries too usually have helpful material on the shape of the book, the combination of themes, the use of sequence and of programmatic markers in key positions: besides material on individual poems and lines, there are important sections in introductions: Propertius 3: Fedeli 1985: 19–33; 4: Hutchinson 2006: 16–21; Tibullus: Murgatroyd 1994, xi–xv; Maltby 2002, 49–53; Ovid, *Amores*: McKeown 1987, 90–102. See Heyworth and Morwood 2011, 27–9 for the author’s take on sequence and structure in Propertius 3.

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CHAPTER 15

Translating Roman Elegy

Vincent Katz

In this essay about my experience translating Roman Elegy, I hope to demonstrate some of the ways in which translation can be a useful tool for literary analysis. At the same time, translation of poetry is an attempt to create an art work, something different from analysis. I will be writing specifically about the experience of translating the Latin of elegists of the first century BCE (primarily Propertius, though I will touch on Tibullus and Ovid) into the particular American language of my era.

My poetic diction has been influenced by the poets of the New York School as well as the Black Mountain School. These poets regularly mix high and low language; the vernacular is given equal importance to the literary. The New York poets engage in flights of poetic and linguistic imagination. I should also mention the sonnets of Edwin Denby, with their difficult condensations of phraseology and classical learning. These poetic models would prove useful when I came to approach the task of translating Sextus Propertius.

Analyzing translations of poetry, one finds that subtly – or not so subtly – interpretation is woven into the work of translation. Some translators, feeling that the poetry is too strange or remote for the contemporary reader, will smooth out the source text by glossing patronymics, explaining arcane mythological or cult references or historical context with which the translator feels the poet's contemporaries would be familiar but confronting which the contemporary reader will be lost. I disagree with this method of translation. I believe that the translation should remain close to the referential quality, as well as to the language, grammar and syntax of the source, as those will best represent the linguistic qualities of the poetry. Poetry is characterized primarily by these linguistic qualities, even more than by its ideas. All the references and context that the editor feels necessary should be supplied in notes or essays accompanying the translation.

With Propertius, the first consideration is the text. Propertius has a late and problematic manuscript tradition. A study of editions and commentaries made it clear that readings in Propertius were more often open to debate than those of most other Roman poets. Taking as a model the complex and often difficult contemporary poetry with which I was familiar, I began to think that many of the irregularities in Propertius' poetry might not be the result of textual corruption but in fact be due to the inventive genius of the poet. In contemporary poets like John Ashbery and Denby, one often finds syntax stretched to the breaking point and actually broken. Expressive power is achieved by condensing, elision, and outright rupture of syntactical logic.

Why could a similar thing not be happening in Propertius' poetry? I became more comfortable with Propertius' elisions and compressions, his mixtures of high and low tones. I decided to respect the manuscript readings to the greatest extent possible. I would follow a verbal substitution when the manuscript reading was nonmetrical in an unfelicitous way, rarely for any other reason; I did accept some transpositions of couplets. Neologisms, unparalleled usages, not to mention difficult syntax, would all be allowed, interpreted as the straining and pushing of a poet trying to put extreme emotion into a new style. In order to make these experiments more explicit, I will discuss in my essay Propertius' expressive uses of verb tenses, metaphor (particularly sexual metaphor), rhetoric, tone, and vulgarity.

I had wanted to make an anthology of Greek and Latin poems in translation, but Douglas Messerli, the publisher of Sun and Moon Press, with whom I discussed the idea, said he would prefer to publish a translation of a work that existed as a book in antiquity. I thought immediately of Propertius' *Monobiblos*, and Sun and Moon published my translation in 1995 with the title *Charm*. I subsequently translated all Propertius' poems (169 pages in Latin); these translations were published in 2004 by Princeton University Press as *The Complete Elegies Of Sextus Propertius*. I will refer to these publications as *Charm* and *Complete Elegies*.

Relying mainly on the Oxford Classical Text, edited by E. A. Barber (second edition, 1960), I referred extensively to the commentary by W. A. Camps (Cambridge). I decided to include in *Complete Elegies* a Latin text facing the translation. This text reflects my decisions regarding readings by textual critics of the manuscript tradition. I am not a textual critic. However, the translator must make decisions in regard to the text, as well as in regard to interpretation. In the selections below, for Propertius, I give my Latin version of the text, followed by the translation. For the selections of Ovid and Tibullus, I give the Oxford Classical Text Latin, followed by my translations. If no citation is given, the translation is my own.

Translation, like criticism, is an ever-evolving practice. Just as the critic may change his or her reading of a text with time and age, so the translator finds his or her solutions changing somewhat over the years. Partially, this has to do with evolutions in the target language. "Babes," for instance, in poem 2.22a.20, which I used to translate Propertius' *formosas*, I might change now to "hotties," and I would probably want to use "lover" instead of "sweetheart" for *cura* in poem 1.1.36.

I should point out that, while doing my translations of Propertius, I never referred to any other translator's versions, and in fact, the only translation I had read before doing my own was J. P. McCulloch's; I had also read Ezra Pound's *Homage To Sextus Propertius*.

Poem 1.1 seems a good place to start analyzing translations of Propertius. My Latin for the first eight lines of the first poem, as published in *Complete Elegies*, is precisely that of the second Oxford edition:

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
 contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.
 tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus
 et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus,
 donec me docuit castas odisse puellas
 improbus, et nullo uiuere consilio.
 et mihi iam toto furor hic non deficit anno,
 cum tamen aduersos cogor habere deos.

Warden's translation of the first eight lines of 1.1 is close to the source, despite a few intrusions:

She was the first to enslave me, and she did it with her eyes;
 till then I'd never felt love's poison arrows.
 This time I did — he soon put an end to my haughty looks,
 pinned me down on the floor with his foot on my neck.
 He's a harsh tutor — and this is what he's taught me:
 to keep to tarts and live life off the rails.
 And now it's been going a year this restless passion,
 with the gods against me all the time.

He separates the two ideas – she was the first, she did it with her eyes – a separation I believe necessary. Line two, however, introduces “poison arrows,” whereas *contactum nullis ante cupidinibus* has no such arrows. Warden misses the provocative *contactum*, with its senses of touch and disease (central to Propertius' conception of love) and downplays *cupido*, using the neutral “love,” whereas *cupido* introduces the range of obsessive sexual desire Propertius will focus on in his poems. “Haughty looks” captures *lumina fastus*, though it leaves out the persistency in *constantis*, a persistency that will soon be channeled into another pattern, that of slave-like devotion. Warden moves the important “down” concept in *deiecit* from line three to four and adds a floor, but the foot on the narrator's neck is just right. He misses the *donec* moment, substitutes the too-funny “keep to tarts” for the shocking contempt of *castas odisse puellas* (which, we soon learn, is Cynthia's contempt), while his “live life off the rails” works well for *nullo uiuere consilio*.

The Penguin translation, by Shepherd, and the Oxford translation, by Lee, are both works by highly esteemed classical translators. Both translators are intimately versed not only in Propertius' work but in the entire genre, and in classical poetry in general. Such commitment fires a scholar's enthusiasm to represent every semantic subtlety present in the source. These translations are very close to Propertius in terms of ideas. The connotations that attach to certain English usages may or may not be appropriate to the original. Tone, in Propertius, is very volatile. He can be extremely erudite in one couplet and downright vulgar in the next, in a way that rarely happens in Horace or Vergil.

Shepherd's version of 1.1.1–8 goes thus:

Cynthia was the first
 To capture with her eyes my pitiable self:
 Till then I was free from desire's contagion. Love
 Then forced me to lower my gaze of steady hauteur
 And trampled my head with his feet
 Until, perverse, he had taught me to demur
 At faithful girls and live without taking thought.
 A whole year, and my frenzy does not flag,
 Though I'm forced to know the gods' disapprobation.

He hews very closely to Propertius' metaphors and turns of phrase. Every important concept and linguistic pattern is included. He is also careful with word placement, isolating *improbis*, as the oppositional "perverse," between commas. The issue here is one of diction. Starting with "my pitiable self" for *miserum me*, we find a weakening of the source's intensity of painful emotion. Terms in Propertius are usually extreme. *Miser* is one of the key terms in Roman elegy, and a strong word must be chosen for it: "fool," or perhaps, "loser." "Sufferer" might work in certain situations. "Hauteur" is too fancy for this particular passage; Propertius is capable of high erudition, but here he is stating his case in plain, if powerful, language. The same weakness mars the choices of "trampled" and "demur" for *pressit* and *odisse*. Finally, "disapprobation" seems like a term a child might receive for bad behavior. It does not do justice to the devastating force contained in *adversos deos*.

Lee's solutions are tonally more apposite:

Cynthia first, with her eyes, caught wretched me
 Smitten before by no desires;
 Then, lowering my stare of steady arrogance,
 With feet imposed Love pressed my head,
 Until he taught me hatred of chaste girls –
 The villain – and living aimlessly.
 And now for a whole year this mania has not left me,
 Though I am forced to suffer adverse Gods.

Lee includes all the Propertian concepts and preserves the syntactical flow. However, "smitten" is inappropriately archaic and misses the connotations of *contactum* noted above. "Arrogance" is a good word to use, as it is a key Propertian concept, usually possessed by Cynthia. "The villain" is again somewhat old-fashioned, but it does an excellent job of paralleling the placement and meaning of *improbis*.

In my own translations, I tried to develop an appropriate American tone for Propertius. My first two lines are the same in both *Charm* and *Complete Elegies*: "Cynthia was the first. She caught me with her eyes, a fool / who had never before been touched by desires." I needed a full stop after "Cynthia was the first." I felt it justified by the initial power of *Cynthia prima* in the source. It is the first poem of the first book, a programmatic poem, and the first phrase of the first line stands on its own as *materia prima*: *Cynthia prima*. This will be the main subject of Propertius' love poems. Further, I felt

the other possibilities were weaker. I could have written, "Cynthia was the first to catch me with her eyes," but this leaves strange semantic possibilities – that some other woman might have caught the narrator with Cynthia's eyes at a later date, or another woman might have caught the narrator earlier with another part of her body. To spell readings out like that makes them seem absurd, but when embedded in the translated phrase their problematics are more subtle. In my opinion, two separate ideas are present in the source: Cynthia was the first; and it was her eyes that caught the narrator.

My second version of lines 3–4 is closer to the syntax of the original, and this is the direction I moved in the more I worked with the poems, in an attempt to preserve the defining qualities of Propertius' art. I can still recall the motivation for my earlier version, however. It comes from wanting to produce an English equivalent with similar rhythmic swagger to the original that retains a similar semantic complexity. I chose to write "I really hung my head in shame," as that allowed me to connect that line to the next line, by having the pronoun "it" take the place of "my head." In my mind, the concept of "down," expressed in *deiecit*, was central to the thought, and I was able to include that. If Love cast down his look, it meant his eyes were now looking down. From that it followed his head was, or soon would be, hanging down. That, to my later, stricter, viewpoint, was going too far, as it was reading something into the text that is not explicitly there. My next extension in *Charm* went even farther. I extrapolated from Love's casting down the narrator's look of pride the conclusion that he would feel shame. It is not clear that a sense of shame would automatically attach itself to the experience of losing one's pride.

The more faithful rendering brings in the personification of Love earlier, allowing it to dominate a four-line sequence. Including "until" for *donec* reflects the increased intensity of the narrator's suffering under Love – it has a lasting effect. The same applies to "perversely." Propertius enjambs *improbis* at the beginning of line six almost as a vocative. We will see that vocatives are an important tool in Propertius' expressive arsenal. Here, he lays the word in there tauntingly, and I tried to translate *improbis*, in *Complete Elegies*, in a way that keeps the syntactic flow going, reflecting the Latin, while simultaneously sticking out on its own, like an epithet.

Here is my translation of these opening lines, from *Charm*:

Cynthia was the first. She caught me with her eyes, a fool
 who had never before been touched by desires.
 I really hung my head in shame
 when Love pressed down on it with his feet.
 He taught me to hate chaste girls!
 He was cruel when he told me to live without plan.
 It's already been a whole year that the frenzy hasn't stopped.
 Even now, the gods are against me.

In *Complete Elegies*, I have the same section as:

Cynthia was the first. She caught me with her eyes, a fool
 who had never before been touched by desires.
 Love cast down my look of constant pride,
 and he pressed on my head with his feet,
 until he taught me to despise chaste girls,

as if I had found the idea in a hiding place in her pocket.
 An errant wisp of hair that strays from her forehead
 is enough to inspire a poem, or that queenly knack of her posture
 and my joy at the way she holds her head when she walks...

In contrast to these approaches, I have found that closely following the poet's grammar and imagery provides a translation that is a more accurate representation of the original, gaining power, as does the Latin, from condensed language in a tightly rhythmic cadence:

If I've seen her walk, radiant in Coan silk,
 then this entire volume shall be made of silk.
 If I've seen her hair falling loose across her face,
 she goes contented, arrogant in my praise.

The Latin in line 8 is *laudatis superba comis* – literally something like “arrogant in the praise her hair received” – but the clear emphasis on the “I” in the Latin of lines 5 and 7 makes it acceptable to attach the possessive pronoun “my” to the praise. One could try to distinguish between *capillos* in line 7 and *comis* in line 8. Lee does, using “ringlet” and “lock,” perhaps in an effort to show how ridiculous the obsessions of the elegiac poets could be, but I read the tone in this passage differently, as one of awe, not bathos, and have preferred to accentuate Cynthia's arrogance.

Poets create patterns of rhythms and sounds, and it is essential for a translator to remain sensitive to word usage and repetition of words in the source text. Within a poem, I try to translate a repeated Latin word by the same English word, to parallel how the poet used repetition in the original, usually in order to make the word's meanings more manifold. Conversely, across several poems, two different Latin words may be translated by the same English word. In the original, and also in my translation, continuity is tighter within single poems than among separate poems.

Working to clarify connotation is an essential task in translating Propertius. Sexual connotation is one of the most expressive factors in the diction of Propertius' love poetry. It can be found in isolated instances, as well as in the large-scale metaphors discussed below. To give an example of the sexuality in Propertius' language, one might cite line 2.1.4, *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*, which I have translated as “The girl alone erects my genius.” Here, Propertius gives credit for the special quality of his love poetry not to the muse Calliope, not to the god Apollo, but to his girlfriend, Cynthia. The irony, as often in Propertius, suggests a reading that pushes the meaning of the line to its limits. The tone is one of elevated repartee. He has referred in line 1 of this poem to his love poems (*amores*). In lines 5 and following, he will be lapsing into sensual reveries, inspired by Cynthia, and then, in lines 13 to 16, imagining a vigorous sexual interlude. All of this taken together suggests a powerfully sexual reading of line 4, which is why I chose the word “erects” for *facit*, highlighting an analogy between his genius or talent (*ingenium*) and his sexual desire, or literally, his genitals.

I used the same English word, “erected,” in another sequence, translating a different Latin word from that used in poem 2.1. In 2.3.8, Propertius writes *numquam tollitur ullus amor*, which I translated as “never is any love erected.” Here, *amor* and *tollitur* make a sexual interpretation even clearer than in 2.1. Other usages earlier in the poem – *cecidit*

spiritus ille tuus (2), which I translated as “that resolve of yours fallen” and *studiis seueris* (7), which I have as “rigid zeal” – lean towards a sexual reading in line 8.

Another key concept for Propertius, and one whose verbal expressions the translator must take extra care in conveying, is that of pride, or contempt. The adjective *superbus* is often used by Propertius in this context, and we have already encountered the noun *fastus* in the third line of the first poem. There, I translated it as “pride,” as it was possessed by the male narrator, and I felt the emphasis was more on his foolhardiness than on the destructive power inherent in the “contempt” wielded by Cynthia. In 2.1.8, I have translated *superba*, describing Cynthia, as “arrogant.” In 1.15.1, Propertius uses *levitas* to describe the thing he most feared from a relationship with Cynthia – that she would not take their relationship seriously. In that context, I translated *levitas* by the English “contempt.” I used “contempt” again in 1.18.5, this time to translate the Latin *fastus*, and again in 2.8.16 for *uerba superba*. Here is my Latin for 2.8.13–16, followed by my translation:

ergo iam multos nimium temerarius annos,
improba, qui tulerim teque tuamque domum?
ecquandone tibi liber sum uisus? an usque
in nostrum iacies uerba superba caput?

So was I totally ridiculous all those years, you slut,
when I supported you and your household?
And when have I ever been free of you? Or will you
continue to dump your contempt on my head?

(2.8.13–16)

This concept began in the poems as the narrator’s foolish pride, which was quickly dashed by Cynthia’s contempt. After suffering much abuse, the narrator, in poem 2.11, fantasizes that Cynthia herself, without the narrator to praise her, will suffer the contempt (*contemnens*, 5) of a traveler, who passes her burial spot. The same emotion is felt in poem 3.25, a goodbye poem whose passion belies its sincerity. Here, *fastus* (15) is modified by *superbos*, as the narrator imagines Cynthia as an *exclusa*:

exclusa inque uicem fastus patiare superbos,
et quae fecisti facta queraris anus!

(15–16)

and shut out, may you suffer proud contempt in your turn,
an old hag, and lament that what you once did is done now to you!

(3.25.15–16)

In attempting to keep my translations close to the original text, I strove to preserve Propertius’ rhetorical effects. While I did not follow a metrical formula, I did try to imitate Propertian effects of word placement and also the statement-and-response nature of the Propertian elegiac couplet. Rhetoric can be thought of as the way a writer constructs his or her arguments, the form into which she or he puts ideas and examples to make the most compelling case. In poetry, persuasiveness is based on sound and rhythm as much as on ideas. I do not strive to make aural references to Latin texts, yet one can approximate Latin’s rhetorical effects in English. Comparing a passage of Latin with my English

version allows the reader to observe how I have attempted to find a suitable substitute for the anaphora in the original. I thought it was important to give a sense of the rhythmic force of this passage. Since Latin is an inflected language, whereas English is not, I was not able to begin each phrase with “me.” I therefore decided to move the “me” to the end of each line or half-line. Here is the Latin for 2.6.9–14, as published in *Complete Elegies*:

me iuuenum pictae facies, me nomina laedunt,
 me tener in cunis et sine uoce puer;
 me laedet, si multa tibi dabit oscula mater,
 me soror et cum qua dormit amica simul:
 omnia me laedent: timidus sum (ignosce timori):
 et miser in tunica suspicor esse uirum.

And here is my translation:

Portraits of youths and their names destroy me —
 the tender voiceless boy in his cradle destroys me!
 Your mother destroys me, if she gives you lots of kisses,
 so do your sister and her girlfriend, who sleeps with her.
 Everything destroys me: I’m cowardly (pardon my fear)
 and in my madness I suspect there’s a man inside that dress.

Propertius, more than either of the other two Roman elegists, delights in juxtaposing vastly different tones within the same poem. Sometimes, these diverging tones are paralleled by a distinction between the immortal and mortal worlds. In poem 2.25, for instance, the poet contrasts mythological figures, who suffered because of their devotion, with the modern Roman man, who cannot decide what type of girl he likes best. The language parallels the difference in status: “It was better to be turned to stone by the Gorgon’s face, /or even if we suffered the Caucasian vultures” (2.25.13–14) for “Gorgonis et satius fuit obdurescere uultu, /Caucasias etiam si pateremur auis,” followed by “you’ve seen some of our girls: both types drive you nuts” (2.25.44) for *nidistis nostras, utraque forma rapit*. Other times, Propertius’ purpose is to show how similar the divine and human worlds are. In poem 1.13, Propertius brings the immortal and mortal together to intensify a sexual image:

nec mirum, cum sit Ioue digna et proxima Ladae
 et Ladae partu gratior, una tribus;
 illa sit Inachiis et blandior heroinis,
 illa suis uerbis cogat amare Iovem.

No wonder, when Jove’d do her — she looks just like Leda,
 she’s even prettier than Leda’s child, one of the three.
 She’s sexier than Inachian heroines.
 With her words, she forces even Jove to love her.

(1.13.29–32)

There are many passages in Propertius’ poetry where the informal tone requires the use of vulgarity. I have found this quality provokes a strong reaction in readers,

some of whom believe its use in English is not appropriate to the Latin original. I believe that vulgarity is necessary in English to get across the effects of anger, exultation, surprise, jealousy, and humor in the original. Often, a word of direct address provides such a challenge for the translator. In 1.3.39, *improbe* is such a case (cp. 1.1.6 and 2.8.14). It depends largely on one's reading of the tone of Cynthia's complaint in this passage. If one imagines her using high-flown language to voice her complaint in a calm, collected manner, then terms such as "villain" or "shameless man" might work. If, however, we imagine someone who is worldly and given to lascivious behavior, then it is not a stretch to imagine that person using violently provocative language. The rhythm, too, and the placement of the word *improbe* seem to me to call for special emphasis. Therefore, I translated it by the common American term "asshole":

o utinam talis perducas, improbe, noctes,
me miseram qualis semper habere iubes!

If only you could experience the nights you always
force me to endure, you asshole!

(1.3.39–40)

McCulloch's version captures the mood and language accurately, though he translated *noctes* as a singular, perhaps to highlight the particular occasion:

Damn you,
may you lead the sort of night
that I am forced to,
you debauched drunkard.

Likewise, in poem 1.14, the intensely sexual imagery of the Latin provides the tonal suggestion for a rough vernacular translation of lines 15–16. In particular, the emphasized rhythmic effect of placing *nulla* at the beginning of line 16 calls for a similarly emphatic expression in English. Lines 9–16 reveal a gradually building fervor, interweaving low and high elements:

nam siue optatam mecum trahit illa quietem,
seu facili totum ducit amore diem,
tum mihi Pactoli ueniunt sub tecta liquores,
et legitur Rubris gemma sub aequoribus;
tum mihi cessuros spondent mea gaudia reges:
quae maneant, dum me Fata perire uolent!
nam quis diuitiis aduerso gaudet amore?
nulla mihi tristi praemia sint Venere!

When she prolongs our hotly desired rendezvous
or drives our whole day in lingering sex,
then the Pactolus' waters flow under my roof,
and a pearl is plucked from the Ruber!
Then my joys promise kings will yield to me!

May they remain till the Fates command my death!
 Who enjoys wealth when their love is down?
 Prizes ain't worth shit with Venus angry!
 (1.14.9–16)

Other instances that occasion vulgarity refer to the violent emotions associated with the sex act, in particular the jealousy arising from thoughts of one's beloved having sex with another partner:

atque utinam, si forte pios eduximus annos,
 ille uir in medio fiat amore lapis!
 And I hope, if by chance I've lived a pious life,
 that man may turn to stone while he's doing you!
 (2.9a.47–48)

In this case, I translated *in medio amore* by “while he's doing you.” It seems an appropriate rendering, the English in fact no more vulgar than the Latin. In 2.16.13–14, I took the literal Latin word *membrum* and the explicitly sexual word *libido* as keys to the following interpretation:

at tu nunc nostro, Venus, o succurre dolori,
 rumpat ut assiduis membra libidinibus!
 But you, o Venus, help us in our suffering:
 let him bust his dick from too much fucking!
 (2.16.13–14)

Another purpose for using vernacular is humor, as in poem 3.23, on the subject of the narrator's lost or stolen writing tablets. In this case, the poem purports to quote an actual message (let's imagine a text message!) from a mistress to her absent lover:

forsitan haec illis fuerint mandata tabellis:
 “Irascor quoniam es, lente, moratus heri.
 an tibi nescio quae uisa est formosior? an tu
 non bona de nobis crimina ficta iacis?”
 Perhaps those tablets carried the following messages:
 “I'm so pissed, you loser! Why were you late yesterday?
 You think you've found a hotter girlfriend?
 You say I cheated on you? Bullshit!”
 (3.23.11–14)

Perfidus, the vocative I have chosen to translate as “faithless bitch” in 2.9a.28 and “slut” in 2.18b.19 (I translated *impia* as “whore” in 2.9a.20 and *improba* as “slut” in 2.8.14), makes a return appearance in book four as “bastard,” when Cynthia's ghost returns to shower blame on the narrator. Significantly, on this occasion, as on many others, a reference to the sexual act is nearby (4.7.19 in this case, *saepe Venus trivio commissa est*).

Whenever possible, I tried to preserve Propertius' metaphors in English, as I believe metaphor is one of the principal strengths great poets wield, and I wanted to expose English readers to this poet's invention. For 2.20.23–26, I have translated:

interea nobis non numquam ianua mollis,
 non numquam lecti copia facta tui.
 nec mihi muneribus nox ulla est emptā beatīs:
 quidquid eram, hoc animi gratia magna tui.
 besides, for us, the entrance is always easy,
 always the abundant acts in your bed.
 Not one of my nights was bought with fancy presents:
 whatever I was came from the great generosity of your spirit.

The key word in this passage is *ianua* in line 23. Coupled with *lecti* in the following line, it possesses a highly sexual charge. *Ianua*, of course, is the word for doorway, and the entire metaphor of the *amator exclusus* can be seen as a sexual one, with the locked, guarded, doorway to the mistress' abode standing for her guarded sexual organs, which the lover is at great pains to enter. Here, though, I have used "entrance" instead of "doorway," as multiple connotations are at play in this passage. I have translated *nobis* in line 23 as a first person plural; it could be translated as first person singular, but the emphasis on "you" and "I" in the previous line ("cum de me et de te compita nulla tacent") suggests reading *nobis* as inclusive, indicating a shared experience. So it is not "I am always able to gain easy entrance," but "the entrance is always easy for us." This "entrance" then means something different from a man gaining access to a woman; it means access to shared joy for both of them.

Sexual metaphor is one of the most powerful kinds of metaphor in Propertius' poetry. This appears in standard poetic tropes, such as the boy Love with his bow and arrows and also in a trope Propertius develops to great lengths – that of love as a military adventure. The military metaphor is important, as it strengthens the claim Propertius makes that love poetry is of equal importance to epic poetry and that a life devoted to love is preferable to a life of war. We find, in 1.6.29, the admission, "I wasn't born to praise or fighting," followed by the explanation, "the Fates forced me to my own kind of military." Many other examples follow. In 2.1, the programmatic poem of his second book, Propertius compares sex, and by implication erotic poetry, not only to epic but specifically to martial epic:

seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu,
 tum uero longas condimus Iliadas:
 When, nude, her dress ripped away, she wrestles with me,
 then truly we compose lengthy Iliads.
 (2.1.13–14)

Later in the same poem, Propertius uses the standard rhetorical trope of comparing aptitudes (fates the Greeks would call them), putting sex (and again by implication erotic poetry) on a par with the occupations of soldiers, sailors, farmers, and shepherds, albeit

the language describing the lover's typical act ("nos contra angusto versamus proelia lecto") differs drastically from what we imagine of the others' activities:

nauita de uentis, de tauris narrat arator,
 enumerat miles uulnera, pastor ouis;
 nos contra angusto uersamus proelia lecto:
 qua pote quisque, in ea conterat arte diem.

The sailor tells of winds, of bulls the farmer,
 the soldier recounts wounds, the shepherd sheep.
 Writhing against one another on a narrow bed's our battle:
 as far as each is able, let him, in that art, waste the day.

(2.1.43–46)

The lives of soldier and lover are contrasted again in poem 2.7. Propertius is constantly aware of the expectations of the Roman military state, particularly the demand that he himself should produce poetry celebrating that state. As part of his *recusatio*, his argued statement of inability to perform this task, Propertius, addressing Maecenas in poems 2.1 and 3.9, claims it is not in his nature. However, Propertius' desire to cast love as a military activity shows how strongly this cultural imperative played on him and also his great ability to use irony to twist the state's values:

unde mihi patriis natos praeberere triumphis?
 nullus de nostro sanguine miles erit.
 quod si uera meae comitarem castra puellae,
 non mihi sat magnus Castoris iret equus.

Where will I get sons to offer for triumphs of the state?
 None from my blood will be a soldier.
 But if I were lodging in real camps – my girl's –
 Castor's great horse wouldn't go fast enough for me.

(2.7.13–16)

Wealth can be seen as a metaphor for sex in 2.16.17–18 and 2.32.41–42. Poetry as medicine is the metaphor in 1.10.18. Mythology works by metaphor, and Propertius' vision of death is couched in the metaphor of the two waters, two different paths one may take to the underworld. In 4.7.55–56 he contrasts them as follows: "For separate resting places are allotted beyond the vile stream, / and each party is rowed across different waters" (for "nam gemina est sedes turpem sortita per amnem, / turbaque diuersa remigat omnis aqua"). At the end of the final poem of his final book (4.11.101–102), he returns to this metaphor: "...may I be worthy by merit, / my bones conveyed by the honorable waters" (for ... "sim digna merendo, / cuius honoratis ossa uehantur aquis").

The other two Roman Elegists whose work we have, Tibullus and Ovid, present fewer difficulties to the translator in terms of their language. Tibullus works with many of the same motifs and concepts as Propertius. However, he is much less inclined to irony; nor does he mix high and low language the way Propertius does. Tibullus' use of the elegiac couplet is less sharply defined than Propertius'. Propertius uses the couplet as an expressive vehicle, with the pentameter often reflecting, sometimes commenting on, sometimes changing tone from, the hexameter. In Tibullus, one line flows after another, with less

sense of the couplet functioning as a unit. Here are the opening six lines of the first elegy in Tibullus' first book, in my translation:

Diuitias alius fuluo sibi congerat auro
et teneat culti iugera multa soli,
quem labor adsiduus uicino terreat hoste,
Marta cui somnos classica pulsa fugent:
me mea paupertas uita traducat inerti,
dum meus adsiduo luceat igne focus.

Let another pile up mountains of shining gold
and acquire many acres of farmland;
let him fear for his hard work when his enemy's near,
may the battle cry put to flight his sleep:
as for me, let my poverty convert me from inactivity,
until my hearth shines with a hearty flame.

If we compare this to the opening of Propertius' 1.1, we can see right away a difference in tone. It is challenging, in Tibullus' case, to find words of an appropriate elegance, with mellifluous rhythms that match those of the original. However, there is little difficulty identifying the tone and maintaining it throughout the poem.

Ovid also uses motifs and characters familiar to us. His particular contribution to Roman elegy is that the sexual language and subject matter is specific, more so than either Propertius' or Tibullus'. The tone seems to present some sharp turns, but in fact they are mainly conventional. There is not, in Ovid's *Amores*, the same emotional intensity one finds in Propertius' poems. This, again, makes finding the words to translate Ovid less of a challenge. Here is my translation of the opening of the first poem of the first book of Ovid's love poems:

Arma graui numero uiolentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conueniente modis.
par erat inferior uersus; risisse Cupido
dicitur atque unum surripuisse pedem.
'quis tibi, saeue puer, dedit hoc in carmina iuris?
Pieridum uates, non tua, turba sumus.
quid, si praecripiat flauae Venus arma Mineruae,
uentilet accensas flaua Minerua faces?
quis probet in siluis Cererem regnare iugosis,
lege pharetratae uirginis arua coli?
crinibus insignem quis acuta cuspide Phoebum
instruat, Aoniam Marte mouente lyram?
sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna:
cur opus adfectas ambitiose nouum?
an, quod ubique, tuum est? tua sunt Heliconia tempe?
uix etiam Phoebus iam lyra tuta sua est?

Weapons and bloody wars in heavy meters I was preparing
to publish, the mode fitting the matter.
The second verse was the same; Cupid, they say, laughed

and snatched one foot away.
 ‘Who, cruel Boy, gave you this right over our songs?’
 The Muses’ poet, not yours, are we.
 What, if Venus should snatch golden Minerva’s weapons,
 should golden Minerva brandish lit marriage torches?
 Who would approve that Ceres should rule in mountain forests,
 that the lands of the quiver-bearing virgin be rightfully cultivated?
 Who would assume Phoebus’ famous hair and sharp spear,
 while Mars plays on the Aonian lyre?
 There are many great and powerful realms for you, Boy:
 why does your ambition try to win this new work?
 Is everything now yours? Does Helicon now belong to you?
 Is Phoebus’ lyre still safely his?

Let us compare this to Propertius 3.3.13–24. In Ovid’s passage, the narrator blandly chastises Cupid. His argument – “to each his own” – is (as the poet knows) not effective, since Cupid should by rights be *expected* to influence erotic poetry. Ovid synthesizes the dilemma in a question: “sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna / cur opus adfectas ambitiose nouum?” (lines 13–14), “There are many great and powerful realms for you, Boy / why does your ambition try to win this new work?” Propertius, by contrast, has Apollo attacking the narrator, contrasting his ambition with his natural gifts. As often in his poetry, Propertius expounds on this idea with a variety of metaphors: poetry is represented as a river, a field, a book read by a girl, and a sea. Propertius is able to summarize this in the effective sententia: “mollia sunt paruis prata terenda rotis” (line 18), which I translated as “small wheels are for tilling soft fields.” Ovid’s thoughts are rhetorical, the language used to convey them functional. Propertius uses unconventional language to condense and stretch ideas.

As mentioned earlier in this essay, I had read Ezra Pound’s *Homage To Sextus Propertius* prior to working on my own translations. Although I did not refer to the *Homage* during my translation process, I later found that certain phrases of Pound’s had lodged themselves in my ear. For the opening line of poem 3.16, Pound (*Homage* III) has “Midnight, and a letter comes to me from our mistress.” What I like about this is how it tries to parallel the word placement of the Latin’s “Nox media, et dominae mihi uenit epistula nostrae”. Following Pound, I too used the historical present: “Middle of the night, and a letter comes from my mistress.” Another opening of Pound’s I admire is “Me happy, night, night full of brightness; / Oh couch made happy by my long delectations” (*Homage*, VII) for “O me felicem! o nox mihi candida! et o tu / lectule deliciis facte beate meis!” (2.15.1–2). This time my solution was quite different: “Lucky me! radiant night! and you / couch made fertile by my pleasures!” I found I could circumvent Pound by remaining close to the ground, as it were, closer to Propertius’ original grammatical and syntactical impulses.

The *Homage* is prescient in its approach to text and to the concept of the cultural other. Many poets today compose versions of texts based on sound alone, or take an idea from a source and make variations on it, or re-combine textual elements using language-recognition software. Pound opened up this area, with its potential for stirring volatile debate, with his approach in the *Homage*. It is not a work of scholarship; it is a compelling work of poetry. Especially surprising is the willful and critical way Pound

recombined Propertius' text, almost as if he were extrapolating from the shakiness of textual tradition. The *Homage* is a reminder that a translator is a creator of literature.

It seems to me that translation reveals, more acutely than any other form of interpretation, two opposed readings of the poetry of Propertius. Quintilian wrote, "The most brief and elegant exponent [of elegiac verse] is in my opinion Tibullus; there are those who prefer Propertius. Ovid is less restrained than either, Gallus more harsh" (*I.O.* 10.1.93; translation by M. Winterbottom in Russell and Winterbottom, *Ancient Literary Criticism*, 394). It is possible to interpret Quintilian's comments to mean that Propertius possesses, to a lesser degree than Tibullus, the same stylistic qualities of being *tersus* and *elegans*, which we might define in English as "polished" and "rhetorically refined." In that view, Propertius is a balanced, predictable poet, lacking the ability or desire to convey strong emotion.

I would argue, on the contrary, that the subject of all Roman elegy is intense emotion and that, in their different ways, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid all strive for linguistic, syntactical and stylistic means to convey the turbulent emotional landscape of the lover. Ovid characterized Propertius' poetry as *blandus* (*Tr.* 2.465; 5.1.17) and *tener* (*Ars* 3.333). *Blandus* in the world of Roman Elegy means something like "smooth" or "alluring." Propertius styles himself a *blandus amator* in 2.3.16, which I translated as "Mr. Smooth." *Blandus* is also a term Propertius' narrator uses of his poetry when he claims (in *I.8b.39–40*) to have won Cynthia not through gifts but by his words ("hanc ego non auro, non Indis flectere conchis, / sed potui blandi carminis obsequio"), which I have translated as "I was able to sway her not with gold, nor with Indian conches, / but with the blandishment of alluring poetry." It may be that Ovid is referring more to the character of Propertius' poetry as a tool for seduction than to its linguistic qualities. Although *tener* can mean "weak" or "soft," I believe Ovid is using the word to describe Propertius as someone devoted to sensual pleasures, a decadent.

If we take it as a given that Propertius' poetry is meant to convey violent emotion, then we should expect the matter of the poetry – the vocabulary, the grammar, and the syntax – to reflect that violence, and that in fact is what we find. As regards the poetry of Tibullus and Ovid, I would characterize both poets' work as more polished than Propertius', where polished means that loose ends are tied up, meter is used in more predictable ways, syntax follows more recognizable patterns, and tone is kept more consistent. Propertius ends up being more inventive, and therefore more exciting, as a poet, because he allows loose ends to remain loose, experiments more with effects of meter, pursues syntax whose condensed, ambiguous nature suits his subject matter, and juxtaposes drastically different tonal effects. Translation has the ability, and the duty, to express a judgment on these matters.

FURTHER READING

For those who want to delve more deeply into some of the ideas discussed in this essay, I enthusiastically recommend the following texts. Betty Radice, in her introduction to the Penguin edition, gives an excellent, clear, explication of the manuscript tradition and much else. W. G. Shepherd's "Translator's Foreword" to the same volume gives a personal account of his battle with "Sextus Pound." Michael C. J. Putnam's commentary on Tibullus raises the commentary itself to a literary form and is particularly good on the idealizing nature of Tibullus' elegiac imagination. I highly

recommend as well Putnam's essays on Propertius and Tibullus in *Essays on Latin Lyric, Elegy, and Epic*. W. R. Johnson's foreword to *Charm* is a tour de force of cultural criticism. Georg Luck, in *The Latin Love Elegy*, remains the most elegant and perceptive overview. Pound should be consulted: not only the *Homage*, readily found in his collection *Personae*, but also the illuminating pedagogue of *The ABC of Reading*: "LISTEN to the sound that it makes." And for approaches of mind to literature that are based on personal dedication, refer as well to the essays of Charles Olson (*Collected Prose*, 306): "Best thing to do is to dig one thing or place or man until you yourself know more abt (sic) that than is possible to any other man." *Tutus eris...*

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PART V

Aspects of Production

CHAPTER 16

Elegy and New Comedy

Sharon L. James

...an tu tibi
verba blanda esse aurum rere, dicta docta pro datis?

...or do you think, for
your part, that sweet words are gold, that learned talk stands in for gifts?
(The *lena* Cleareta to her daughter Philaenium,
Asinaria 525–26; translations here are my own.)

...vocent, molesti sint, occentent ostium;
impleantur elegeorum meae fores carbonibus.

....they'll call out to her, become pests, bang on at the threshold;
my doors will all be filled up with elegies written in charcoal.
(The *senex amator* Demipho, to his son Charinus,
on how men will harass the beautiful Pasicompsa,
Mercator 408–09.)

me miserum!

wretched me!

(Charinus, *Mercator* 624; Clitipho, *HT* 401;
Chalinus, *Andria* 646; Pamphilus, *Andria* 882)

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis.

Cynthia was the first to capture wretched me with her eyes.

(Propertius 1.1.1)

me miserum! certas habuit puer ille sagittas!

wretched me! that boy had unerring arrows!

(*Amores* 1.1.25)

From textual cues to generic structures, Roman love elegy everywhere shows its roots in New Comedy. Scholars, and especially commentators, have not failed to identify various passages and episodes in elegy as influenced by, or deriving from, analogous moments in New Comedy. Thus, for instance, it is universally recognized that the scenario of Propertius 4.5 and *Amores* 1.8 – the lover eavesdrops while an older woman gives corrupt advice to his beloved – is taken from Plautus' *Mostellaria*. Likewise the energetically woeful *me miserum!* of *Am.* 1.1.25, quoted above, is widely understood as overtly invoking the common exclamation of the unhappy *adulescens amator*, also cited above.

Elements ranging from individual poems to standard topoi have been identified and explored in elegy scholarship. What I argue here (as in James [1998] and [2003]), is that elegy and New Comedy are far more intimately related than has been generally recognized. The social structures of life in antiquity and the familial-personal conflicts of New Comedy operate as pervasively in elegy as on the comic stage. These extra-textual realities, embedded in the texts, provide the tensions and conflicts that engender the relationships and contents of elegiac poems.

But even prior to the extra-textual social realities that underlie the personal relationships on view in Roman love elegy and New Comedy is another crucial element, namely performance. Though the New Comic poets certainly expected their plays to be read by those who could acquire copies (as indeed they read other men's plays), they composed for the stage and for performance. Likewise, the elegists gave public performances of their poems, well before issuing a published volume; see McKeown (1987, 63–73) and Gamel (1998, and in this volume), who remind us that rhetorical training required practice in performance as an integral part of the educational process. Ovid trained seriously at law and rhetoric, then defected early to poetry, but Propertius and Tibullus received years of rhetorical training and declamation practice, as a standard part of their education. The performative dimension of elegy is another crucial link between the two genres.

Social Structures and Sexual Relations

A brief overview of the social background to elegy and New Comedy: in the caste societies of antiquity, only the citizen classes were legally and politically important. Among citizens, of course, the elite classes held the most power and influence. But citizens, upper-class and lower-class alike, were surrounded by non-citizens – slaves and resident foreigners, of whom some would have been voluntary immigrants and others would not. The citizen populations of both Athens and Rome interacted constantly with

these non-citizens. In particular, sexual relations frequently crossed class lines, almost always those between citizen men and non-citizen women.

The citizen classes of antiquity kept their female members under strict control, restricting citizen female sexuality exclusively to marriage and harshly punishing any violations. In both Athens and Rome, citizen girls were married quite young, usually to older men: Athenian girls could be married at age fourteen, often to men aged around thirty-five; in Rome, girls could be married off at age twelve, though they were not always so young. The age difference in Roman marriages was not usually quite so great as in Greek marriages. This age gap meant two things: first, it overtly assured the bride's virginity and, hence, her husband's paternity of their children; second, as an inevitable consequence, it left citizen young men with no other choice for heterosexual encounters and relationships than non-citizen women. Any man had sexual access to his slaves, at any time, throughout his life, but if he wanted to engage in a non-forcible sexual relationship, he had to go elsewhere, outside his home. (See Dover 1973, 61–62 on the difficulties a young man might have meeting girls of his own social class; as Dover further notes [69], these problems really applied to the propertied classes, as poorer citizens could not afford to keep their women indoors.)

Thus prostitution was widespread, and offered a form of protection for citizen virginity. Solon, the great lawgiver of Athens, established the city's first brothel, explicitly to offer citizen men an outlet for their sexual urges and to protect thereby the chastity of citizen women. Zoning laws did not exist, so brothels could be located anywhere (see McGinn, 1998). Prostitution was therefore ubiquitous in cities, on a broad spectrum of levels: at the bottom there were desperately poor streetwalkers and prison-like brothels full of enslaved persons who frequently did not speak the local language. Women who worked at inns and taverns often took pay for sex, as a sideline. Some of the women who worked in brothels (whether as slaves or for personal pay) had valuable skills, such as dancing, music, or singing, and could be hired by the night, particularly for men's drinking parties (as opposed to those who never left their brothel cells). New Comedy offers a model of a family-type enterprise: a free prostitute brought up girls, either her natural daughters or adopted, and trained them to enter the profession and support her (*Asinaria*, *Cistellaria*, *Eunuchus*; such is the charge against Neaera). Finally, at the top, were the extremely elite independent courtesans. These women must have been very few in number, but they were socially visible, even prominent (e.g., Aspasia, Volumnia Cytheris, Lais), and culturally important, as they were of great interest to the Greco-Roman literary imagination. Such women were highly educated, well-practiced at singing, dancing, and music; they mastered all the arts of captivation (on which, see Griffin 2001) – and they were fabulously expensive. Comedy and elegy draw on various of these models, as we shall see.

Love, Money, and Social Class in New Comedy

New Comedy, from Greece to Rome, shows young men falling madly in love with beautiful young women to whom they cannot have unfettered or permanent access. Their passion interferes with their social and familial obligation to marry. The young men typically feel very sorry for themselves, and are prone to pathetic lament. (This is

the subject position of the elegiac lover-poet; see below.) In a comedy, an *adulescens amator* (young man in love) will be desperately in love with the girl next door – who happens to be a prostitute controlled by a pimp (as in *Pseudolus*) or her mother, a *lena* (as in *Asinaria*; *lena* is an untranslatable word, but amounts to mother-figure/business manager for a prostitute or courtesan). Love turns the young man to mush, so his clever slave must find a way to trick his parents out of the money needed to purchase either her freedom or her exclusive services for a year. The lover laments his passion, but can take no action on his own behalf. A variant on this plot links comedy tightly to elegy: the *adulescens* is crazy about an independent, free courtesan, but cannot compete with his wealthy rival, usually an obnoxious soldier (as in *Eunuchus* and *Truculentus*). This particular scenario recurs frequently in elegy.

Meanwhile, the girl next door is under constant pressure to earn money, a pressure she must pass on to her lovers. Whether she is a slave (Phoenicium of *Pseudolus*), a free young woman supporting herself, her mother, and their household (Philaenium of *Asinaria*, Gymnasium of *Cistellaria*), or an independent courtesan with her own household (Thais of *Eunuchus*, Phronesium of *Truculentus*), she must always remain conscious of the need to earn money from men who desire her. In one of the genre's most impossible fantasies, these young women may turn out to be long-lost citizen daughters. They will thus be eligible to marry their devoted lovers (Palaestra of *Rudens*, Selenium of *Cistellaria*). If such a girl has had sex before her reunion with her family, she has done so only with her devoted lover.

A battle rages between the lover and the agent who demands his money before granting him access to his beloved. The young man makes two arguments, both of which fall upon deaf ears: first, "I love her and am miserable without her, but can't pay," and second, "I have paid plenty to you and your establishment in the past, so you should let me in now." The first argument rests purely on pathos, being an emotional appeal for, effectively, mercy in the face of the lover's suffering. The second treats the sexual relationship as if it were voluntary on the part of the *meretrix*, a relationship of equal and equally loving parties whose interactions ought not to be considered purely mercenary. (In this argument, the young man resents both the money he has already spent and the prospect of spending more, so he tries to transfer the basis of the relationship from finances to love.) The respondent – whether pimp/owner, *lena*/mother, or *meretrix* herself – rejects this equation, frequently with sarcastic enjoyment, although the independent *meretrix* uses different rhetoric. All such scenes are comic highlights in their plays, and characterize the young lover as foolish and naïve.

Thus Calidorus of *Pseudolus* argues with Ballio the pimp, on the grounds that he, Calidorus, is miserable, perishing because of love and lack of money (299–300). This interchange demonstrates the gap between lover and pimp:

BAL. No lover is useful except the one who gives eternally; let him give and keep on giving; when he runs out of money, he should stop loving right then.

CAL. Have you no pity? **BAL.** You're talking nonsense – words don't jingle!
(305–8)

Calidorus goes on to complain that Ballio has no consideration for their past relationship, in which he has paid money to the pimp: "sicine mihi abs te bene merenti male refertur gratia?" ("Is this the bad thanks I get in return for having been so good to you?")

320). The term *gratia* suggests Calidorus' notion that he and Ballio have engaged in a mutually beneficial relationship that should guarantee him continued access to Phoenicium. Ballio, of course, has already explained his view of the relationship to Calidorus: it's mutually beneficial as long as the lover continues to pay.

Argyrippus of *Asinaria* takes a similar approach to the *lena* Cleareta, mother of his beloved Philaenium (who actually reciprocates his affection). Shouting on her threshold, he uses language very like that of Calidorus: "bene merenti mala es, male merenti bona es" ("you're hard to the one who's done good by you; you're good to the one who's done hardly anything for you," 129). When Cleareta comes out, Argyrippus continues to use the language of appropriate deserts (forms of *mereor*) and his long-standing relationship with her house, from which he is now excluded: "tu med ut meritus sum non tractas atque eicis domo" ("you don't give me the treatment I've earned, and you're throwing me out of the house," 161). They jockey back and forth, in a very funny scene:

ARG. By myself I took you out of isolation and poverty;
if I should just take her away by myself, you could never pay me back in return!
CLEA. Go ahead, take her by yourself, if you're always the only one to give 165
my price. You've got my promise for good, under this law: you give the most.
ARG. What end is there of giving? Because you can never be satisfied:
as soon as you've taken your pay, a minute later you've figured out something
else to ask for. **CLEA.** What end is there of taking her away, of loving?
Can *you* never be satisfied? You just sent her back, and immediately you're 170
begging me to send her back to you! **ARG.** I gave you what you bargained for
with me. **CLEA.** And I sent the girl to you. Mutual benefit was given, equal
for equal, service for money. **ARG.** You're dealing unfairly with me!

Here again, the lover argues that previous friendly relations should earn him special privileges and status, while the *lena* treats the relationship as having arisen not out of friendship but out of commerce. Money; girl – it's just business, she says. Love is irrelevant in this business, a principle the lover, whether he be comic or elegiac, will never accept.

Argyrippus excuses Philaenium from his resentment, blaming Cleareta (146–47), as the Tibullan speaker will do later with the *lena* Phryne and his own beloved Nemesis (2.6.44–54). The lovers who must negotiate directly with their *amicae*, rather than through an intermediary, have a harder time. Without exception, these young men melt under flattery and sweet talk, whether the courtesan sincerely loves them (as in *Eunuchus*) or not, as in this interchange between the bitter Diniarchus and the focused, businesslike Phronesium, who always gets her price:

PHRON. Wouldn't you like to give me a little giftie?
DIN. By God, I seem to be getting richer, darling, whenever you ask
me for something. **PHRON.** Well, *I'll* be – when I've gotten it.
DIN. I'll make sure it's here quick. I'll send my slave boy here.
PHRON. Do. **DIN.** Whatever he brings, you should think highly of it.
PHRON. I know you'll pick out a good one,

that I won't be embarrassed to have sent to me.

DIN. Isn't there anything else you want from me? **PHRON.** Just come visit me when you have some free time. Take care of yourself

(*Truculentus* 425–31).

Phronesium has just explained to Diniarchus that she will be passing off a borrowed baby as her own, to wangle money and gifts from the soldier who thinks he's the father; therefore Diniarchus must stay away from her. He is resentful until she turns on the charm, saying she'll throw the soldier over in a few days. Diniarchus, who previously claimed to have wasted his entire estate on her, collapses, as above.

Similarly, Phaedria of *Eunuchus* begins the play in a fearful rage: his beloved Thais has locked him out of her house in favor of a soldier. He learns from her that the soldier has brought back her adopted sister, Pamphila, whom she believes to be a displaced citizen daughter. She thinks she has found the girl's family, but the soldier, becoming suspicious because of her relationship with Phaedria, is threatening to keep Pamphila. So Thais must persuade him that she is no longer involved with Phaedria; hence she must also persuade Phaedria to stay away for two or three days. Reminding her of the extravagant gifts he has given her in the past, Phaedria objects. As the two negotiate, Phaedria's slave Parmeno listens in:

PHAEDRIA. Is *he* the only to give you gifts? Have you ever noticed
my generosity being foreclosed? When you told me you wanted a little
 Ethiopian slave girl, didn't I drop everything 165
 else and go find you one? And *then* you said you wanted a eunuch, because
 only queens have them! And I found you one! Yesterday I paid 20 minae
 for the two of them. I'm the object of contempt, but I still kept you in 170
 mind. And in exchange for these things, I'm rejected by you.
THA. Then what, Phaedria? Although I want to get her, and I think this is the way
 it can best be done, still rather than have you as an enemy, I'll do as you bid.
PHAE. If only you were saying that speech truly, from your heart: 'rather 175
 than have you as an enemy.' If I could believe you said that sincerely, I
 could tolerate absolutely anything.
Par. [Aside.] How soon, conquered by a single speech, he slides!
THA. Oh no, don't I speak from the heart? What thing have you ever wanted
 from me, even as a joke, that you didn't get? But I can't even get this one 180
 little thing from you, that you'd just agree to two days off.
PHAE. Well, if it's just two days. But they better not become 20 days!
THA. Oh no, not more than two or – **PHAE.** I'm not waiting on that 'or!'
THA. It won't happen. Now, just give me this thing I'm asking for. 185
PHAE. Naturally what you want must be done. **THA.** No wonder I love you;
 you're so good!

Though Thais actually does love Phaedria, as she reveals in monologue, and she despises the soldier, she knows how to sweet-talk them equally. Both Phaedria and Diniarchus fear that they can't survive without their *amicae*, and their sexual jealousy makes them behave irrationally (it has the same effect on their soldier-rivals, who often threaten violence). Phronesium and Thais wheedle, make the *adulescentes* feel special and

privileged, and send them away, at least temporarily, in favor of a soldier. (In *Amores* 3.8, the Ovidian lover laments this precise event: she praises my poetry, but now I, though praised, am locked out because of a newly rich soldier.) As Konstan (1986, 375) points out, Phaedria's gifts, the eunuch and the Ethiopian maid, "are ambiguously a kind of purchase price and tokens of affection – an ambiguity that...inheres in the role of the courtesan." The same structure obtains in elegy – hence, for instance, the Propertian lover complains that he gave many gifts and wrote exceptional poems for Cynthia, but she never expressed love for him (2.8.11–12). In both cases, the lover is giving gifts rather than money, as a way of eliding the commercial nature of the relationship; see Zagagi (1980: 119–20).

If she is to stay in her profession for a long time and make enough money to support herself and her household after her retirement, the *meretrix* must learn not to depend upon a single man, but to balance as many men as she can. As I have argued elsewhere (James 1998), comedy depicts these courtesans on a sliding scale from young and naïve, believing in true love (Philaenium of *Asinaria*, Philematium of *Mostellaria*, Selenium of *Cistellaria*, Pasicompsa of *Mercator*) to the mid-career woman who may still be emotionally engaged with one man or another but knows that he cannot be faithful to her forever (Bacchis of *Hecyra*, Thais of *Eunnuchus*), to the courtesan in her prime, working men over for money and gifts (Phronesium of *Truculentus*, Bacchis of *Self-Tormentor*). The young and relatively innocent *amica* may appear in amusing scenes of instruction by an older woman, such as the one in *Mostellaria*, in which the retired Scapha gives advice to the newly freed Philematium.

SCA. You're definitely making a mistake, since you're waiting on just one man and especially since you reserve yourself for him and turn down the others. It's the job of a wife, not of courtesans, to be devoted to a single lover

(188–90).

SCA. You see how I am now – well, what I used to be! I was loved no less than you're loved now, and I devoted myself to a single man. But by God, when my head changed color because of age, he dumped and abandoned me. I expect the same for you

(199–202).

PHI. But he freed me, and only me, only for himself, at his own expense. I think I should devote myself only to him

(204–5).

SCA. By God, you're an idiot. **PHI.** Why? **SCA.** Because you care if he loves you.

PHI. Well, why shouldn't I care? **SCA.** You're FREE now! Now you have what you were wanting! Unless he keeps on loving you, he'll lose all that money that he gave for your freedom

(208–11).

PHI. I can never give him back as much thanks and gratitude as he has earned from me. Scapha, don't urge me to care less for him.

SCA. But you just think about this one thing: if you devote yourself only to him, while you're young now, you'll regret it when you're old

(214–17).

PHI. It's right for me to have the same feeling for him now that I've got what I wanted,
as I did before I got it, when I was sweet-talking him
(220–21).

SCA. Well, if you're sure enough that he'll always be food for you, and that he'll always
be your own devoted lover throughout your life, then I think you should hand yourself
over to him alone and get your hair ready for the wedding
(224–26).

Of course, there can never be a wedding if the *amica* does not turn out to be the fantastical *virgo intacta* (untouched maiden) pseudo-*meretrix*. Philematium does not turn out to be a long-lost citizen daughter, so she will eventually have to learn that what Scapha tells her, in this scene, is correct: at some point, her adoring lover Philolaches will leave her, either for another *meretrix* or for a wife. This knowledge hangs over the elegiac *puella*, as well.

A final note on New Comedy and Roman literature. Though the plays continued to be performed long after their authors had died, we cannot be sure of the circumstances of re-performance, especially in Rome itself (on performance of Roman Comedy, see Marshall, 2006). It is my conviction that traveling troupes continued to put on plays by the New Comic poets, probably preferring Menander, Plautus, and Terence over other playwrights, and that there was ample opportunity to see relatively informal productions of these plays. Outside Rome, especially in the Greek cities to the south, there would have been more opportunity, especially anywhere that had a permanent theater. I cannot prove such a conviction, of course, though I note that Propertius depicts Acanthis, a member of the lower social orders, as knowing Menander (4.5.43–44). But we do know that elite Romans read and studied Menander, Plautus, and Terence. The elegists refer to Menander often enough to create the impression that they know him well, though we cannot identify any Menandrian play that matches up with their vague plot descriptions; see Traill (2001) and Fantham (1984, 302–303). Practiced scene-readings or partial performances, presented as dinner banquet entertainment, seem to have been common. Whether or not the masses had the chance to see New Comedies performed after the death of Terence, the elite literati of Rome had full access to the texts of Menander, Plautus, and especially Terence, who became a school-text author not long after his death.

Love, Money, and Social Class in Elegy: Putting Poetry In

As I have argued in several venues (James 1998, 2003, 2006), the elegiac *puella* is based on the independent *meretrix* of New Comedy. She cannot be either a brothel slave or a wife. The circumstances, structures, and arguments of elegy make sense only if the *puella* is a highly educated, well-practiced courtesan. Elegy occasionally likes to pretend that she might be a legitimate citizen wife, but it does so in order to borrow the exciting atmosphere of truly forbidden love, namely adultery: the man denoted as the *puella*'s *vir* is merely another customer, albeit one who has paid up for a live-in contract with

her (see James 2003, 41–52). After all, if the *puella* were a wife, she could divorce her husband and marry her poet – and for all he proclaims his eternal passion for her, he never suggests such a thing, or anything even close to it. As Paul Veyne says, the elegiac lover will do anything for his mistress but marry her (Veyne 1988, 2). Marriage would be the death of elegy (Propertius 2.7 articulates a generic hostility to the institution, echoed in *Ars* 2.155–56 and 3.585–86). Slavery, in the form of the *puella*'s enslavement to a pimp in a brothel, would likewise make elegy impossible, because there would be no purpose in writing love poetry to a woman who cannot make her own decisions. Hence elegy dispenses with the *leno* (the elegiac *lena* is never an owner), and retains the independent *meretrix*.

Marriage is, of course, the generic goal of New Comedy, so its complete erasure in elegy is a significant difference between the two genres. Elegy sets itself in the period before a young man must mature and take up his social responsibilities, and it draws not only on love (as comedy does) to postpone that moment, but also on poetry, often claiming that the form of poetry is chosen because of love. That is, the comic *adulescens* argues, in the face of paternal pressure, that he can't marry because he loves an unmarried girl (e.g., Alcesimarchus in *Cistellaria*, Pamphilus in *Andria*); the elegiac lover argues, to his friends and his patron, that he can't write socially responsible poetry because his girlfriend requires him to stay with her and he must write elegy in order to please her.

Regardless of its hostility to marriage, elegy requires obstacles, problems, rivals, and it imports them throughout from comedy. There are a few refinements, of course. To begin with, as noted, the lover is a poet. He is well-connected, but claims absolute poverty on the grounds that he has declined opportunity for profit (epic poetry or military expeditions). His status is that of an *eques*, so he belongs to the second-highest social class in Rome. (Thus, as I have argued in James 2003, to the *puella* his claims of poverty are specious.) Relative to the *puella*, the lover-poet takes the position of the madly devoted *adulescens* of comedy, arguing that his passion merits him special privilege in the form of entrance granted either without charge or in exchange for his poetry (see the explicit statement of Tib. 2.4.13–20, esp. 19–20, and *Am.* 2.1.33–34, where the *puella* is the *pretium carminis*, the payback for the poem). Unlike his literary forebear, however, the elegiac lover operates free of family constraints: there is nobody urging him to marry or withholding money (hence there is no clever slave to help him out, either). Constraints posed by law, politics, or government are resisted in the generic *recusatio*, the refusal to write epic poetry or to take up socially responsible behavior. The elegiac speaker almost never mentions his parents, and certainly not as one of the obstacles between himself and his beloved. His patron, invoked as urging him to abandon elegy and write responsible poetry, takes the place of parents and parental pressures (see Miller 2004, 124–29). But if elegy removes the comic family as an immediate social circumstance, it retains two other blocking characters, namely the advisory *lena* and the wealthy, lower-class rival (on them, see below).

The final set of adjustments upon the characters of comedy, for elegy's purposes, come with the *puella*. Her most important aspect, for the lover-poet, is her erudition as well as her literary discernment, both of which operate as a mirror reflecting back upon her lover-poet. (In this respect, she is almost certainly more highly educated than the average independent courtesan could have been.) Her learning makes her the *docta puella*, and

her approval of her lover's poetry is prized (see, e.g., Prop. 2.13.11–14, 2.26.21–26). When the poetry fails to gain him access to her bedroom, the lover-poet despairs, as in Prop. 2.24b.19–22; Tib. 2.4; *Am.* 3.8. Comedy could probably have had fun with a miserable poet in love, attempting to offer verse in exchange for love, but the *adulescens amator* of the stage is significantly less articulate than is the elegiac lover-poet, as I have noted (James 1998, 8n.23).

In large part because elegy dispenses with parents and pimps, it can attempt to pretend that the *puella* is not a courtesan, and that the relationship is based in love rather than commerce (a view also espoused, as we have seen, by the comic *adulescens amator*). The lover-poet occasionally admits that his *puella* does require payment (see below), but he prefers to think of her as the young, naïve *amica* who loves him and can sometimes be persuaded to let him in for free. His preferred currency, of course, is poetry (hence he is mocked by the advisory *lena*, as discussed below). Because the elegiac *docta puella* is established as a free, independent courtesan, she requires persuasion, and the elegists practice virtually infinite variations on standard themes. Also because she is free and independent, she takes in other men, and thus engenders further subject for poetry. The triangle of lover, *puella*, and rival (almost always a man of lower social class, often a soldier, and sometimes a former slave) is ubiquitous in elegy: even a man who seems to be of higher standing, such as the Illyrian praetor of Propertius 1.8, turns out to be a repulsive barbarian (*barbarus*, 2.16.27), promoted up from a lower social class. The social/financial underpinnings of this triangle are taken directly from comedy, as are the themes found in the poems that present the intrusion of the *lena* into the relationship of lover and *puella*.

I begin with the *lena*, as she is the most easily recognized element from New Comedy. I limit my discussion to the character who gives instruction, advice, and principles of mercantile erotics, omitting such women as Melaenis of *Cistellaria*, who does not put a priority on her daughter's earning capacity, and thus does not interfere in the love relationship. Whether the advisory *lena* appears in Menander, we do not know, but she is certainly found in Herodas (*Mime* 1). The plays of Plautus in which she appears (*Mostellaria*, *Asinaria*) are identified as adapted from Greek originals by Philemon and Demophilos; we have fragments from the former, and we know nothing at all of the latter. But she is prominent in Roman comedy, and is thus an important shared character between comedy and elegy.

The first mention of the advisory *lena* comes in Tibullus 1.5. It is her fault that Delia has a new, wealthy lover, for whom Delia has thrown over the lover-poet: “quod adest huic dives amator, / venit in exitium callida lena meum” (“as to the fact that Delia has a rich lover, that's because the *lena*, clever at my destruction, has come around,” 1.5.47–48). The speaker curses the old lady for ten lines (as he does the *lena* Phryne at 2.6.44–54), then turns to Delia, and gives her orders, in which he accuses the *lena* of having taught greed to his beloved: “at tu quam primum sagae praecepta rapacis / desere” (“but you, abandon the teachings of that greedy old woman, immediately!” 1.5.59–60). In vain, of course – as he admits, shortly after, the door must be knocked upon by a well-filled hand (1.5.67–68).

In the next poem, the *lena* character is Delia's mother, and she has been working for the lover-poet, rather than for his rival, and as Gaisser (1971, 211) points out, “she, like Delia, does not perform her services for free.” In this poem, as in poem 1.2, the lover-poet

has paid the old lady to help him gain access to Delia, either by paying a *saga* to perform religious rituals, as in 1.2.42–62, or by simply slipping some money to Delia's mother, who then leads Delia to him (1.6.57–72). Significantly, he asks this *dulcis anus* (63; also called *aurea anus*, 57, on which see Gaisser [1971, 211]), to give Delia some instruction: though he knows that Delia cannot wear the garb of a respectable wife, he wants her mother to teach her to be chaste: *sit modo casta, doce* (67). Thus, in Tibullus Book 1, the *lena* affects the lover's access to the *puella*: when he pays her and she helps him, she is a *saga* and a *dulcis, aurea anus*, but when she advises Delia to ignore him in favor of the paying lover (or, as in 2.6, she tells obvious lies to the lover), she is an evil *lena* and deserves cursing. In either case, as long as she is the one talking to Delia, she is in a position to give instruction, and it is this instruction that gives her power against the lover-poet. (The *saga* of 1.2 and the priestess of Bellona, 1.6, are powerful, particularly at prophecy, but they seem to have no access to Delia, and therefore no influence on her. On the spectrum of these strange old women in Tibullus, see Zimmermann Damer 2010).

The two major elegiac *lenae*, Acanthis, of Propertius 4.5, and Dipsas, of *Amores* 1.8, have been widely discussed (see Gutzwiller 1985, Myers 1996, O'Neill 1998, James 2003, 52–68), so my remarks here are brief. Propertius and Ovid give their *lenae* ample room to talk (something Tibullus never does), and their lessons provide overarching principle, theory, and specific strategies. The primary goal for the *puella* is to make as much money as possible while she is young, a principle that requires her both to have more than one lover at a time and to extract money from her lovers by every possible means. The operating theory is that the right amount of uncertainty will cause a lover to be more generous, and the strategies range from starting a quarrel that will cost the lover money to end (Prop. 4.5.31–32; Ovid *Am.* 1.8.79–81), to getting household staff and kin to dun him, especially for birthday gifts (Prop. 4.5.35–36; Ovid *Am.* 1.8.91–92), to making sure he thinks he has rivals (Prop. 4.5.29, 39–40; Ovid *Am.* 1.8.94–100).

There are other tactics, as well, of course, and they are found *passim* in elegy (see James 2003, 65–67). The issue relevant for the connection of elegy to comedy is this: the *lena* is constantly aware, and constantly urges the *puella* to be aware, that time is passing and that her period of making money is limited, so nothing matters but money now. Even a *puella*'s inclination to indulge a particular lover for free must be inhibited: as Dipsas says, even the handsome young man she might want to let in for free will have to bring a gift from his own lover (*Am.* 1.8.67–68) – and on just those grounds Cleareta of *Asinaria* refuses her daughter's request to be allowed to see Argyrippus for free as long as other customers pay (504–44). Money is everything, at all times. The *puella* is supporting a sizable household, and must save up for her future, as Scapha tries in vain to teach Philematium. Two further principles devolve, both calculated to drive a young citizen lover mad: first, social class does not matter. Thus Acanthis says, “aurum spectato, non quae manus afferat aurum!” (“look to the gold, not the kind of hand that carries the gold,” Prop. 4.5.53). She and Dipsas specifically forbid turning down soldiers, sailors, and freed slaves (Prop. 4.5.49–51; Ovid *Am.* 1.8.63–64). The comic lover is always particularly disturbed to think of his beloved with a soldier, and the elegiac lover is no different (see discussion below).

The second principle is that poetry and pretty words are irrelevant: “an tu tibi verba blanda esse aurum rere, dicta docta pro datis?” says Cleareta to her daughter (“do you think, for your part, that sweet words are gold, that learned talk stands in for gifts?”

Asinaria 524–25). Her terminology specifically looks forward to elegy: *docta* is highly charged, as the lover's erudite poetry requires a learned girlfriend. In addition, *blanditia* is virtually a synonym for elegy, as marked at *Am.* 2.1.21, where the lover-poet must drop his epic poem and return to elegy, so that his girlfriend will open her door: *blanditias elegosque leves, mea tela, resumpsi* ("I took up sweet talk and light elegy, my weapons, again"). Cleareta's lesson comes back with elaboration from the elegiac *lena*: Acanthis asks, *versibus auditis quid nisi verba feres?* ("once you've heard poetry, what do you take away but words?" Prop. 4.5.54). Dipsas expands: "what has that bard of yours given you besides new poems?" (*Am.* 1.8.57–58). She mocks poetry by asserting that the lover who gives gifts is greater than Homer and that it's a matter of talent, *ingenium*, to give gifts (61–62). Acanthis even targets the Propertian speaker by mockingly quoting the first words he addresses to Cynthia, in poem 1.2, and orders the *puella* to prefer Coan garments and coin over poetry (Prop. 4.5.55–59; here, with Fedeli, I read lines 55–56 as part of the text, rather than interpolated). As we shall see, the *puellae* of elegy routinely obey the injunction against socio-sexual snobbery.

Though the comic *adulescens* is never articulate enough to commit poetry, he is certainly educated, as befits the son of a well-off citizen family; indeed, his tutor may still be around (as in *Bacchides*). If Argyrippus' *dicta docta* are not actual poetry, they are certainly *verba blanda*. More to the point, however: he always stands in contrast to the unrefined, coarse soldier. Even when a soldier seems to be actually in love with a comic *meretrix* (e.g., Stratophanes in *Truculentus* and Thraso in *Eunuchus*), he is depicted as insensitive, crude, stupid, and prone to violence against both his beloved and his rival. In elegy, not only is the lover highly educated, but he uses his education as his primary claim for deserving the *puella*'s time, and his primary means of earning that time. The comic *adulescens* and the elegiac lover-poet are always up against a paying rival of lower status.

This rival is found everywhere in both elegy and comedy. Cleomachus (*Bacchides*), Therapontigonos (*Curculio*), Stratophanes (*Truculentus*), Diabolus (*Asinaria*; not necessarily a soldier, but dependent upon a parasite, as the soldier often is), Polymachaeroplages (*Pseudolus*), Pyrgopolynices (*Miles*), and Thraso (*Eunuchus*) are unpleasant boors. Philotis of *Hecyra* describes the unnamed soldier who took her to Corinth on a two-year contract as *inhumanissimus* (*Hec.* 86). Menander's soldier tends to be salvageable, so to speak (e.g., Thrasonides and Polemon of *Misoumenos* and *Perikeiromene*), at least as long as he is a citizen man wanting to marry his beloved, but the soldier-rival of Roman Comedy is at best a smug fool (Stratophanes) and at worst a violent kidnaper (Pyrgopolynices). Cleomachus of *Bacchides* is especially disturbing in this respect: he has the sister Bacchis under contract but is not emotionally attached to her – he wants either her or his money, with which he can engage another woman, but he does not care which he gets.

The elegiac rival is likewise ubiquitous, playing, as Konstan (1986, 391) notes, a "necessary role": various men function as the *vir* (e.g., Tib. 1.6; *Am.* 1.4, 2.2–3, 2.12, 2.19, 3.4), and there are miscellaneous rivals (Prop. 2.8–9; Ovid, *Am.* 3.14; Tib. 2.6; see also Tib. 1.6, where Delia has a very complicated juggling act going on, and the *vulsus nepos* of Prop. 4.5). In addition, there are always soldiers about, willing to spend all their spoils on the *puella*: Cynthia's Illyrian praetor (Prop. 1.8, 2.16) and the nonspecific braggart of 2.24c, the rich former slave of Tib. 2.3, and the recently wealthy soldier of Ovid, *Am.* 3.8 (*recens dives*, 9). The lover contrasts these men to himself, considering

them all beneath him. Like their comic counterparts, they are unobservant and stupid at best (the *vir* of Tib. 1.6 and Ovid, *Am.* 2.19), crude and repulsive at worst. The speakers in Propertius and Tibullus both complain that a *barbarus* has taken over their kingdom (*regnum*, Prop. 2.16.27–28; Tib. 2.3.59–60). Ovid picks up on the socio-aesthetic disgust of Prop. 2.13–14, in which the lover complains that the bright (*candida*) Cynthia has been virtually merged (*fusa*, 24) for seven nights to a hideous man (*foedo viro*): the soldier of 3.8 has been recently made rich by fighting, and is a knight fed on blood (*sanguine pastus eques*, Ovid, *Am.* 3.8.10). His body is scarred; his arms used to carry and wield weapons; he might even have killed somebody with his hands (13–22). Worst of all, this repulsive specimen may be suddenly, and unexpectedly, preferred over the refined lover-poet: after a couple of nights together, the Propertian speaker says, he is called heavy upon Cynthia's bed, though she had just been praising him and his poetry (Prop. 2.24b.19–22; cf. Ovid, *Am.* 3.8.5–8).

Reading Comedy Back into Elegy

This brief survey of characters should demonstrate the degree to which elegy depends upon comedy for its regular characters and standard episodes. The remaining question is what we gain when we keep this generic interaction in mind as we read elegy. The first result is that elegy becomes very rich in self-deprecating humor: the poets present their eponymous speakers, the *personae* of themselves, as hopeless and helpless, in situations deeply familiar to Roman readers as comic. Thus all of elegy gains in absurdity and dimensionality. When the Propertian speaker threatens to kill himself and then Cynthia (2.8.17–18, 25–28), we may hear Alcesimarchus of *Cistellaria* making the same threat in a comic fluster (524–25). When Tibullus' speaker absurdly asks Delia's mother to teach her chastity (*sit modo casta, doce*, 1.6.67), he invokes a self-canceling concept voiced by the stuffy pseudo-*meretrix* Adelphasium of Plautus' *Poenulus*, namely *meretricia pudicitia* (a courtesan's chastity). When the Ovidian *amator* gives lengthy and detailed instruction about how his beloved is to conduct secret communication with him, via her table manners (*Am.* 1.4), he calls up the hilarious contract scene of *Asinaria* (on this subject see James, 2006). Likewise, as McKeown (1989, 162–64) argues, when the *amator* has struck his *puella* (1.7), Ovid draws on the violence of Menander's *Perikeiromene*. Knowing this background, we know not to take the speaker's postures too seriously.

But if elegy's self-conscious claim to tragic passion is undercut by its foundations in comedy, those same foundations allow the elegists to explore aspects of a passionate attachment that is genuinely forbidden not because a man loves, say, another man's wife (if she were married, she could divorce and marry her poet, as I have noted above), but because he loves a woman he can never possess, a woman whose social class and profession, forced upon her precisely by her social class, will always eventually separate them. A permanent attachment to such a woman is not socially tolerable, particularly as the Augustan regime becomes more entrenched and more interested in enforcing socially responsible sexual behavior, via the Julian laws. In addition, this particular woman owns herself: unlike a wife, a slave, or a brothel prostitute, she is under the control of nobody, especially of no man (see James 2006, 224). Hence the lover is all the more unable to

possess her. The socially determined structures of the relationships found in both elegy and comedy allow for virtually infinite variations on the themes and attitudes shared by the two genres.

David Konstan has persuasively and perceptively argued that Terence's *Eunuchus* develops those themes in a way that leads up to the elegiac explorations of the tensions and contradictions inherent in extra-marital love in ancient Rome:

I should propose also to locate in the tradition of the *Eunuch* the complex of themes that constitutes Roman elegy: the ambiguous status of the mistress, who remains aloof from marriage; the problem of greed and gifts; the necessary role of the rival; and the emphasis on sincerity and inner feeling, for which the Roman elegists have been honored as the inventors of subjective love lyric.

(Konstan 1986, 391).

I am inclined to agree that Terence is particularly rich as a source for elegy, as his *adulescens* character often shows a sensitivity and commitment that are not found in the Plautine version (see Pamphilus in both *Andria* and *Phormio*, for example), traits that are a point of pride in the elegiac speaker's view of himself. But I suggest that some of Plautus' explosiveness is also to be found in elegy (as in such matters as death threats, however absurd), which includes, amid its elegant, witty, erudite, elite verses, a constant awareness that social realities will always intrude upon the private realm of unmarried love, and that the bodies and livelihoods of socially marginal women – even the beautiful, self-possessed comic *meretrix* and elegiac *docta puella* – are at constant risk from such things as male violence and the inevitable passage of time. Plautus will allow a young, devoted *meretrix* to articulate her own passion for a lover (Philaenium of *Asinaria*, Philematium of *Mostellaria*, and Pasicompsa of *Mercator*), but always in harsh consciousness of the reality faced by these young women – a reality that elegy shows only in tiny glimpses: she will age, and her lover will move on. The extra-textual social structures showcased by comedy and elegy both make possible the contents and themes of the genres and predict their inevitable conclusion. Reading elegy with comedy in mind permits a richer, more complex reading experience: elegy becomes simultaneously both more funny and more sad. If comedy teaches us not to take at face value the mad, self-absorbed declarations of an unstable lover-poet, because they echo the same speeches made by his literary grandfather, the comic *adulescens*, it also shows us the social realities being faced, and postponed only briefly, by both the elegiac lover-poet and his *docta puella*.

FURTHER READING

The first thing for students of elegy to read is New Comedy, and many will prefer to begin with translations. The Loeb volumes of Arnott (1979, 1996, 2000) and Barsby (2001a and 2001b) are superb, with excellent translations and essays preceding each play. The Loeb volumes of Paul Nixon are serviceable, but antiquated. They will soon be replaced with de Melo (2011 and forthcoming volumes). The translations of Balme (Menander), Brown (Terence), and Radice (Terence) are also very fine. Plautus is harder to find in translation, though the versions published by Johns Hopkins University Press, edited by David Slavitt and Palmer Bovie, are usually available in libraries.

The relationship of New Comedy to elegy is not a new topic, but it has attracted relatively little attention in the last forty years or so. See James (1998, 3n.1) for a review of scholarship on the subject. Thomas (1979) discusses the influence of Greek New Comedy upon Roman literature, with further bibliography. See also Traill (2001). In other publications, I have explored the generic connections between elegy and New Comedy, with a particular focus on their shared constructions of gender; see James (1998, 2003, 2006). Konstan (1986) is a central reading for anyone interested in the generic relationship of elegy and New Comedy.

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CHAPTER 17

Authorial Identity in Latin Love Elegy: Literary Fictions and Erotic Failings

Judith P. Hallett

Introduction

My discussion considers how Catullus, Cornelius Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius, Sulpicia and Ovid – the Latin poets who wrote about love in the elegiac meter, during a period that extends from the mid- to the late first century BCE – represent themselves in their writings, as participants in both contemporary Roman society and their distinctive Greco-Roman literary tradition. Like many a Latin love elegy itself, my discussion of elegiac authorial identity adopts a complex responsive stance, simultaneously engaging and taking issue with a provocative, written presence. Yet the provocative, written presence to which I will adopt a complex responsive stance is not a poetically inspirational human erotic object like Lesbia, Lycoris, Delia, Nemesis, Cynthia and Corinna, the female *inamoratae* who command center stage in the dramatic scenarios created by the male elegiac poets; or like Cerinthus, the young man at the heart of Sulpicia's amatory and literary universe.

Rather, I will be engaging and taking issue with recent studies that privilege the literary, and especially the fictional, dimensions of Latin love elegiac scenarios while minimizing their autobiographical and realistic elements. Such studies have, for example, characterized the females featured as the poets' love interests in these scenarios as merely what Maria Wyke has called "written women": imagined and idealized figures, placed and thereby rendered life-like in contemporary Roman surroundings, who do not necessarily correspond to real-life counterparts in the lives of the poets themselves. I am seeking to explain the presence, and argue for the importance, of autobiographical and realistic details in love elegiac texts by illuminating the role of the references in these texts to people, places and activities on the contemporary Roman scene in constructing elegiac authorial identity.

I will contend, however, that the fictionalizing literary strategies deployed by the Roman love elegists, among them allusions to earlier elegiac and other erotic poems, still merit close attention. They serve an important function in situating and credentialing Latin elegiac poets and their writing within their chosen genre, and in enabling these texts to treat problematic and painful aspects of love itself. I will also contrast the writing practices of the male elegists with those of Sulpicia in this regard. First, though, let us consider some ancient Roman evidence about the autobiographical and realistic details provided by and about Latin love elegiac poets.

Ancient Sources on *Dramatis Personae* and Roman *Realia* in Latin Elegiac Texts

In considering how the Latin love elegists represent themselves, and portray their love objects as well as the other *dramatis personae* in their poems, we need to begin, chronologically, at the end: with the latest works in the elegiac meter, by Ovid, last of the Latin love elegists; and with the evidence and explanations that Ovid and other ancient authors provide for the practices that he and his predecessors adopted when writing in this distinctive literary genre. Ovid wrote his late poems, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae Ex Ponto*, after his exile in 8 CE from Rome to Tomis on the Black Sea. These exile poems warrant scrutiny in conjunction with the love elegies previously written by Ovid himself, the *Amores*, as well as those of his predecessors. Like these earlier works, they are composed in the first person and the elegiac meter. But they are first and foremost autobiographical and realistic poems, sharing the poet's own, present feelings and circumstances, and reflecting on his past experiences.

Indeed, Ovid begins *Tristia* 4.10 by offering to explain in detail to his *posteritas*, future readership, exactly who he was. The poem describes his upbringing, interactions with older and younger poets of his time, literary career, marriages, parenthood, and ultimately his reactions to his banishment. In the course of these descriptions, we should observe, he leaves the impression that those who read his work made a distinction between how he represented his erotic conduct in the *Amores* – which he calls his “youthful poems,” *carmina iuvenalia* (*Tr.* 4.10.57) – and his actual behavior: implying that they viewed these love elegies as projecting an imaginative, often fictitious self-portrait of their literary creator. For in lines 59–60 he discloses that a particular woman had sparked his talent and that his heart was extremely susceptible to erotic passion. Yet, despite the illicit nature of the sexual scenarios he claims to perform in his elegies themselves, he then proudly declares that no scandal ever became attached to his name.

At lines 361 and following of *Tristia* 2, a long poem addressed to Augustus, Ovid defends the erotic verse which led to his banishment, citing a host of literary predecessors, first Greek and then Roman, who wrote about love with impunity. In his roster of Roman writers he highlights several amatory poets who also wrote in his own, signature, elegiac meter: commencing with Catullus, and eventually discussing Gallus, Tibullus and Propertius. As we will see, his roster includes a female poet, to whom he refers as having written poetry herself. Among the other poets listed is Sulpicia's father, although not Sulpicia herself. In his comments on these fellow poets, he acknowledges that their works

incorporate autobiographical material even as he foregrounds their use of fictitious details. Furthermore, other ancient Roman sources supplement and corroborate some of Ovid's assertions in this passage.

For example, at 427 ff., after observing that Catullus wrote of his female beloved under the "false name" (*falsum ... nomen*) of Lesbia, Ovid adds that Catullus also made public "many love poems in which he himself admitted his own adultery" (*multos vulgavit amores/in quibus ipse suum fassus adulterium est*). Over a century later, at *Apology* 10, the Roman novelist Apuleius elucidates this woman's *falsum nomen* by attesting that "Lesbia" – a name alluding to the island where the early Greek female poet Sappho dwelled – was the metrically equivalent pseudonym for one Clodia. On the basis of details furnished by Catullus himself as well as by other writers such as Cicero, scholars customarily identify this woman as Clodia Metelli, wife of Quintus Caecilius Metellus Celer, consul of 60 BCE.

Apuleius goes on to identify Metella, Hostia and Plania as the actual, metrically equivalent, Roman names of the women referred to by the Greek names of Perilla, Cynthia, and Delia in the love poetry of Tigidas, Propertius and Tibullus, Book One, respectively. In this same passage from the *Tristia*, moreover, Ovid like Apuleius, notes that Perilla was the pseudonym for Metella; he represents her as both a love poet and love topic, celebrated in Tigidas' erotic, and sexually explicit, verses about her. But he does not go so far as to identify this woman as the daughter of Clodia Metelli, although latter-day scholars have ventured this interpretation.

So, too, at lines 445 ff. Ovid refers to the *inamorata* of the love poet Cornelius Gallus by the Greek name of "Lycoris," maintaining that "it was not a source of shame (*opprobrio*) to have celebrated her, as it was to have been insufficiently discreet when drunk" (*sed linguam nimio non tenuisse mero*), evidently an allusion to Gallus' actual, boastful behavior rather than his poems. Servius' much later commentary to Vergil's tenth eclogue – a bucolic poem in dactylic hexameters that portrays Gallus as dying for love of Lycoris in an imaginary Arcadian landscape – identifies this woman as the mime actress Volumnia Cytheris. Like the pseudonyms Cynthia and Delia, which recall Mount Cynthus and the island of Delos, two Greek sites sacred to Apollo, god of poetry, Lycoris evokes Lycoreia, a locale near Delphi associated with the same divinity. Finally, as observed earlier, at line 60 of *Tristia* 4.10, Ovid admits that a particular woman inspired his own earlier love elegies, too. He discloses that she was called, "not by her true name" (*nomine non vero dicta*), but by the name of a celebrated and historical Greek female writer, Corinna, ranked second to Sappho in the roster of Greek women poets.

Ovid's complimentary words about Tibullus as a literary model at *Tristia* 2.447 ff. do not mention the names of any women celebrated in Tibullus' elegies. Nevertheless, he does portray Tibullus as sharing his own, illicit amatory experiences in his poetry. Ovid states that Tibullus confesses (*fatetur*) that he taught his own beloved how to deceive her guards. He later observes that Tibullus teaches (*docet*) married women to deceive their husbands, to remind his addressee Augustus that Tibullus was not punished for his erotic teachings as Ovid was for his.

And, when lamenting Tibullus' death in one of his own earlier love elegies, *Amores* 3.9, Ovid does depict Tibullus as mourned, and fought over, by two *inamoratae*, called Delia and Nemesis respectively. Tibullus portrays Delia as his beloved in the first book of his elegies, and casts Nemesis in the same role in the second. Curiously and humorously,

although Tibullus does not assign words to either woman in his elegies, in *Amores* 3.9 Ovid portrays each as speaking at Tibullus' funeral, with Nemesis uttering a pentameter line from Tibullus' own elegies: 1.1.60, *te teneam moriens deficiente manu*, "dying, may I hold you with a hand losing strength." There, however, these words are a wish expressed by Tibullus himself, to hold *Delia's* hand when he lies dying. Since Apuleius represents the Greek name Delia as a metrically equivalent pseudonym for the Latin Plania, Nemesis, the name of a Greek goddess, would seem to have been a pseudonym of a similar sort, with the same number of syllables and the same accentual pattern as the name of an actual Roman woman. The literary associations of Nemesis may derive from various Catullan poems, such as 50 and 68, where this divinity is portrayed as wielding great power over Catullus and his poetry.

Tibullus does not appear to have written most of the poems contained in the third book of poetry associated with his name. Whereas Ovid, Apuleius and various other ancient authors provide independent information about Catullus, Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid himself, they say nothing about the poets whose elegies comprise most of Tibullus Book Three. Our sole source on these writers, and their practices of identifying themselves and the objects of their passion, is their poetry itself, to be examined next.

Tibullus Book Three begins with six elegies by a male speaker. He refers to the woman he hopes will return his affections as "Neaera", a Greek name that the Augustan poet Horace employs in such poems as *Epode* 15 and *Odes* 3.14 for a female he depicts as of erotic interest to him. Yet the one time he identifies himself by name, at 3.2.29, he also refers to himself with a Greek pseudonym, "Lygdamus" – the name of a slave in Propertius' poems.

Later in Tibullus Book Three, in elegies 8–18, we encounter a female poet-speaker twice identified by the name Sulpicia. Unlike "Lygdamus", unlike the Metella identified in both her own poetry and that of her lover Tigidas as "Perilla", and unlike a young female literary protégée Ovid also addresses by the pseudonym "Perilla" in *Tristia* 3.7, Sulpicia represents herself by her own Roman name. She further resembles Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid in portraying herself as an erotic performer in her own amatory verses, poems that are mostly written in the first person. Yet the eleven Sulpicia elegies utilize a pseudonym, Cerinthus, for her young male lover. As David Roessel has argued, his name alludes to the Greek and Latin words for the wax of her writing tablets, and consequently to Sulpicia's poetry itself. But this pseudonym also evokes Horace's portrait of another erotically inclined man of the same name in *Satires* 1.2: this Cerinthus is said to prefer adulterous encounters with expensively outfitted, well-born women to cheaper, safer liaisons with prostitutes.

All five of these poets thereby encourage the inference, made by Ovid himself, that the dramatic scenarios in their verses are to some extent autobiographical. These poets – and Gallus as well – also afford the impression that they are recording actual events by populating their literary scenarios with identifiable historical figures referred to by their own names, and by portraying themselves, the poet-speakers, as interacting with these individuals. More significant, in contrast to such Latin literary works of their era as Vergil's *Eclogues*, located in an imaginary pastoral landscape, all six – and "Lygdamus" as well – further imply that their elegies reveal details of their own lives by setting their poems in their own, contemporary Roman milieu.

By adopting these literary practices, moreover, Gallus and the Augustan love elegists follow in the tradition of Catullus' earlier poems, both those in lyric meters and those in the elegiac couplet. Catullus' verses address and depict such recognizable individuals as Cornelius Nepos, Julius Caesar, Pompey, Gaius Licinius Calvus and Cicero. As Roy Gibson's essay in this volume observes, the few lines that survive of Cornelius Gallus' poetry, on a papyrus only discovered in the late 1970's, represent the poet-speaker as addressing Caesar, presumably Julius Caesar: he asserts that his own fates will be sweet when Caesar returns as "the greatest part of Roman history."

The elegies of Propertius, Sulpicia, Tibullus and Ovid similarly speak of, and speak to, historical personages. Propertius addresses Augustus' close friend, Propertius' own patron Maecenas at 2.1; Propertius later places his final elegy, 4.11, in the mouth of Augustus' newly dead stepdaughter Cornelia. In 3.16, Sulpicia declares that she is the daughter of Servius, namely Servius Sulpicius Rufus, generally thought to be the consul of 51 BCE. In 3.14, she addresses Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus, consul of 31 BCE, who was apparently her own maternal uncle and legal guardian. Tibullus' elegies also hail Messalla as his own literary patron. While Ovid's *Amores* do not acknowledge, as do two of his elegies in the much later *Epistulae Ex Ponto*, that Messalla was his patron, too, they make mention of Augustus and his fellow poets Catullus, Calvus, Gallus, Tibullus and Vergil.

Gallus and the Augustan love elegists further resemble Catullus in referring to contemporary Roman events, customs and places. In 68, a lengthy and complex poem in elegiac couplets – and a poem that has more in common with the elegies of Tibullus and Propertius than do most of Catullus' other verses in that meter – Catullus in fact emphasizes that he is writing not in Rome but his native Verona. Hence he apologizes in lines 33–34 for lacking access to a great abundance of writers (*scriptorum non magnast copia apud me*, 33) on whom he can draw as learned inspiration for love poems promised to his addressee. Several of Catullus' poems in other meters characterize him as a "man-about-town," an urbane and witty presence on the Roman metropolitan scene. In 10, for instance, he describes leaving the Roman Forum for an encounter with a "little rent girl" (*scortillum*) beloved of his friend Varus; she begs to be taken to the temple of Serapis, carried in a litter by slaves whom Catullus falsely claims to have acquired while on service in Bithynia.

Similarly, in the few extant lines of his poetry, Cornelius Gallus imagines Rome's temples decorated with the spoils of Julius Caesar's military victory in the East. Roman historical events and geographical locales also loom large in poems by the Augustan elegists. Admittedly Tibullus is fond of locating, and envisioning, his interactions with Delia and Nemesis in fantasized rustic settings. But in 1.7 he celebrates the triumphal procession of his patron Messalla through Rome's streets, a major historical event that occurred in 27 BCE. In 2.5 Tibullus waxes both eloquent and prophetic about another current event, the installation of Messalla's son as one of fifteen male priests entrusted with Rome's prophetic Sibylline books; he declares that Messalla will take special pride when the young man celebrates his own triumph at a future time.

Propertius concludes his first book of elegies with two poems about the siege of Perusia in 41 BCE; in the second of them, 1.22, he describes for his addressee Tullus the civil strife that the town witnessed and identifies the town as his own birthplace. The city of Rome itself figures prominently in some of his other elegies. At 2.31 Propertius

excuses his tardiness by claiming to have attended Augustus' opening of the temple of Apollo on the Palatine. 4.8 relates an episode that occurred in Rome's Esquiline neighborhood, when Cynthia returned unexpectedly from an outing to Lanuvium with another man and found Propertius attempting, unsuccessfully, to console himself with two women, Phyllis and Teia. Propertius introduces each of these women by identifying the quarter of Rome in which she dwells.

So, too, in the first of the six "Lygdamus" elegies, the poet-speaker declares that he is writing on the Kalends – the first day – of March, and depicts the presents travelling along Rome's streets in celebration of the Matronalia, the festival held that day, which honors married women. Tibullus 3.8, the first of the eleven Sulpicia elegies, has the Kalends of March as its own dramatic setting. Opening with an address to Mars, the god who gives March its name, it refers to the Kalends as "the god's special date" and Sulpicia herself as dressed to please him. Elegy 14 represents Sulpicia as protesting her guardian Messalla's decision to have her spend her birthday, apart from her lover, in the country; 15 as having prevailed on him to change his mind, and as celebrating her successful advocacy in Roman legal language.

Roman occurrences and places figure in Ovid's *Amores* as well. His fanciful and funny portrayal of a triumph celebrated by Cupid, the god of love, in 1.2, serves as a case in point. It substitutes abstract Roman concepts – some associated with responsible and respectable conduct, others with irrational and emotional erotic activity – for the actual, defeated and victorious, participants in this hallowed, quintessentially Roman public ceremony, discussed by Eleanor Winsor Leach and P. Lowell Bowditch in this volume. At the end of the elegy, the poet-speaker tells Cupid to look to Augustus, his kinsman, since Augustus and the Julian family claimed Cupid's mother Venus as their ancestress, for a model of military clemency. Both Ovid and Sulpicia also emphasize their, elevated, Roman social status. In *Amores* 3.15 Ovid identifies himself as a member of the equestrian social class; Sulpicia makes mention of her aristocratic father in 3.16 when stressing her superiority to a rival.

To be sure, Latin love elegies do not always attempt to represent the actual Roman ambiance in which their authors lived, or the actual Romans with whom they interacted. Many focus almost exclusively on the emotionally-charged interactions of their poet-speakers with their love interests, without providing information about where these interactions supposedly occur. Some love elegies have settings in utterly unrealistic locales, where divinities and mythic personages intermingle with ordinary humans, among them Ovid *Amores* 1.2 and 3.9, which laments the death of Tibullus. Many compare their poet-speaker and other dramatis personae with Greek mythological figures, often, in the fashion of earlier Hellenistic poetry, assuming considerable erudition on the part of the reader in identifying these figures by obscure names. So, too, scenarios of various Latin love elegies set in urban Rome contain details about the poet-speaker that are not only implausible but also at variance with other details provided in other poems – and even in the same poem.

For example, Propertius 4.7 portrays Cynthia as dead and appearing to him in a dream. Yet the next poem, 4.8, represents her as very much alive. While 4.7 suggests that Propertius and Cynthia shared a residence, and several domestic slaves, it also represents Cynthia as recalling how she often stealthily descended, by a rope, from an upper-story window in the raffish Subura neighborhood and made love with Propertius at the

crossroads: an improbable situation for a cohabiting couple. If, moreover, the woman Propertius calls by the pseudonym Cynthia was actually, as Apuleius claims, a married woman named Hostia, it is highly unlikely that she and Propertius would have shared a home and household staff. But the mere inclusion of details indicating that their poems should be viewed as taking place against a contemporary Roman backdrop suggests a deliberate effort on the part of the elegists to situate their circumstances, however fictionalized, in a present-day Roman context: a context with which their readers could more readily identify.

Autobiography and Realism, Poetry and Fiction in Latin Love Elegy

How, then, are we to explain these complex Latin love elegiac scenarios? These scenarios that represent poet-speakers – writing in the first person, identified by their own names – as interacting not only with pseudonymously-identified love interests, male and female, at times in improbable or inconsistently described situations, but also with other historically-identifiable individuals from their own milieu, in a realistic, contemporary Roman setting? While scholarship on Latin elegy in the past frequently concentrated on mining textual evidence to ascertain the “true stories” of the lives, and loves, of Catullus and the Roman elegists, recent studies tend to highlight the imaginative, learned, literary dimensions of love elegiac scenarios, and to shortchange the autobiographical, historical and realistic elements. To justify these priorities, they focus on various fictional details such as the Greek literary associations of the pseudonyms by which the elegists refer to their love interests, and the use of terms for the physical qualities of the female beloved that also characterize the learned, allusive Hellenistically-inspired style of their elegiac poetry itself.

These studies maintain that the prominent presence of love interests with literarily-charged Greek names not their own, the physical descriptions of the beloved in language also employed to characterize elegiac poetry, and the unrealistic aspects of elegy’s dramatic scenarios call audience attention to the poetic medium itself. They assume that the elegists have included such details to encourage and privilege meta-poetic reflection, to focus on the literary qualities rather than the content and message of their writings. Consider, for example, the statement by Roy Gibson in his essay on love elegy in the recent *Blackwell Companion to Latin Literature*, that “readers of elegy must live with the constant suspicion that when elegists talk of their mistresses they are talking also about their poetry” (166).

Efforts to interpret portrayals of the beloved in Latin love elegy as alluding to love elegy itself are by no means new: they date back to Steele Commager’s 1974 *Prolegomenon to Propertius*. But the current preoccupation with the imaginative, learned and literary dimensions neglects a matter of serious concern to earlier scholarship on the Roman elegists. Recent studies rarely, if at all, consider why Latin love elegists, following Catullus, chose to integrate autobiographical information, historical personalities and contemporary social settings into their fictionalized, erotic narratives concerned with, *inter alia*, the writing of poetry itself. To be sure, scholars such as Gibson point to problems

inherent in the mixing of fictionalizing and factuality, such as the irony of Ovid's promise in *Amores* 1.3 to immortalize a mistress whom he merely identifies by a pseudonym. Nevertheless, they avoid the issue of why autobiographical and other realistic elements are there in the first place. And they give short shrift to how, and why, Latin love elegy manages to challenge Roman ideological prescriptions merely by combining the autobiographical and realistic with the fictional.

Most notably, by reversing traditional gender role expectations and challenging conventional political values, Roman elegy creates dramatic scenarios that represent, only to subvert, important aspects of Roman reality. In the essay mentioned above, Gibson denies that the positive portrayal of their female *inamoratae* by the Latin love elegists – as socially self-assertive, independent figures who exert substantial control in their erotic and other personal relationships – can be regarded as a mode of feminist, or even socially radical thinking, owing to what he characterizes as the elegists' "alienation from conventional society." By dismissing the Latin elegiac poets as socially alienated figures, he fails to recognize that many ancient Greco-Roman writers, among them Plato in his *Republic*, found imaginative scenarios productive vehicles for socially radical thinking. The location of what we might call the love elegiac environment in the cosmopolitan Roman scene of the poet's own day plays a significant part in constructing elegiac authorial identity too, by representing their poet-speakers as closely connected with significant people and pursuits familiar to their original audiences, albeit disengaged from many conventional social activities. So, however, does a major fictionalizing strategy of Latin love elegy: its allusiveness to its own distinctive literary qualities, and to other, earlier, literary works.

There are, let me emphasize, doubtless multiple explanations for the presence of autobiographical and realistic details in Latin elegiac texts. Most obviously, by writing in the first person, and thereby purporting to share key moments from their lives and love affairs, the Latin love elegists aim at a general impression of verisimilitude, without seeking to document an externally verifiable, coherent reality. They expected their original audiences, especially readers acquainted with them personally, to interpret these autobiographical details, along with contemporary Roman settings and trappings, as evidence that these poems were in some sense about them, their actual amatory experiences, and their dealings with other inhabitants of present-day Roman society. They wanted respect from these audiences by associating themselves and their work with prominent figures on the Roman political and cultural scene. But they sought literary authority for their writings as well, through such imaginative elements as obviously fictionalized erotic scenarios, marked by dramatic conflicts and heightened emotions, full of erudite allusions and evocations of earlier poetry.

I would like to propose a further explanation. Like most recent scholarship dealing with Roman erotic elegy, my explanation foregrounds its literary and metapoetic dimensions. I claim that the presence of fictional elements combined with autobiographical, realistic details in Latin love elegy allows its poet-speakers to acknowledge amatory disappointment and failure as powerful components of physical and emotional erotic experience, their own and that of their readers. Scenarios combining the realistic with the fictional enable love elegists to distance themselves, and hence their readers, from the personal pain and public humiliation that such erotic disappointment and failure can bring.

I argue as well that acknowledgments of their own erotic inadequacies – along with learned mythological references, allusions to poetry itself, and intertextual echoes of earlier love poetry – help the Roman love elegists, male and female, to credential themselves as practitioners of both love and literature worthy of their poetic predecessors. Admissions of occasional sexual failure also enable them to compete with these other, earlier, love poets as literary authorities on love. For by representing themselves as occasionally failing, though often succeeding, at their amatory endeavors, the Roman elegists can claim literary equality with, and even supremacy over, earlier Latin love poets in a respectful, albeit playful and self-congratulatory, manner.

Male Elegiac Anxiety and Influence: Ovid, *Amores* 3.7 and its Predecessors

A group of poems in which the three major Augustan male elegists describe their own physical erotic disappointments provides a particularly vivid, and literal, illustration of how such descriptions serve to enhance their authority and credibility, literary and amatory. In *Amores* 3.7, the latest of these poems chronologically, Ovid evokes the words and adopts the literary practices of his poetic predecessors when portraying his sexual failures as well as, and ultimately as less consequential than, his erotic successes. He thereby offers a phallically-realized reenactment of the artistic theory propounded by the literary critic Harold Bloom, who posits that an “anxiety of influence” informs the competitive relationship between all male poets and their precursors. It warrants note, however, that Sulpicia draws on earlier Latin – and Greek – poetry about love in a different way when situating, and credentialing, herself as a serious practitioner of both love and poetry, and appears to reap criticism from Ovid for so doing.

Ovid *Amores* 3.7 dramatizes its poet-speaker’s temporary inability to perform sexually with a woman, whom he never names, but merely identifies as someone other than his “regular” beloved Corinna. Like many a Latin love elegy, it compares its poet-speaker to various Greek mythological figures, alluding to them in learned language. At lines 41–42, for example, Ovid claims that even though his partner’s touch could not arouse him, it would be able to rejuvenate the elderly Homeric warrior Nestor, king of Pylos, and make the mythic, aged Tithonus stronger than his years. Although Ovid refers to Tithonus by name, he calls Nestor only, and obscurely, Pylus, “the man from Pylos.”

Most important, in the midst of describing the frustration and humiliation that he earlier experienced on this occasion, Ovid underscores the short-lived nature of his impotence. He first states at lines 65–66 that formerly “my manly bits, however, as if prematurely evacuated by life, lay there, more disgustingly wilted than yesterday’s rose” (*nostra tamen iacuere velut praemortua membra/turpiter hesterna languidiora rosa*). But he then reports to his readers, in lines 67–68, that those “bodily parts – hey – now thrive and flourish at the wrong moment, and now demand their work and military service” (*quae nunc, ecce vigent intempestiva valentque,/nunc opus exposcunt militiam suam*).

In the first of these statements, Ovid uses several words memorably employed by Catullus: one in a poem about the physical exertions and emotional costs of creating love poetry; the other in a passage about male sexual inadequacy. The adjective *hesternus*

“yesterday’s” – which Ovid uses to describe the wilted rose to which he likens his previously flaccid member – is the first word of poem 50: in the phrase *besterno die*. In this poem Catullus initially recounts an erotically charged, mutually stimulating poetry-writing session with his friend Licinius Calvus the preceding day. He then describes his own reactions to this intense literary experience in lines 7–15, culminating in the claim that, after Calvus and he parted, his *membra defessa labore*, “body parts wearied from work” “lay half dead on the little couch,” *semimortua lectulo iacebant*.

Admittedly, Catullus employs *membra* here primarily in its sense of “limbs.” But the eroticized context summons to mind the secondary meaning of *membra* as a term for the male organ, its meaning not only at *Amores* 3.7.65 but also several lines later, at 78, where the dissatisfied female partner asks, sarcastically, who ordered him *nostro ponere membra toro*, “to place your sexual parts on our bed?” Ovid’s use of both the verb *iacere* and adjective *praemortua* along with *membra* to describe his impotence hence sexualizes as it evokes Catullus’ description of his exhausted *membra*. It also recalls the Catullan context, a scene in which two men compete with and arouse one another in the process of composing erotic poetry. Other details in *Amores* 3.7 that associate lovemaking, literary competition and elegiac poetry-writing, to be discussed shortly, impart further significance to this evocation.

In addition, Ovid’s use of the comparative adjective *languidiora*, “more wilted, more limp,” for his own, previously non-functional, penile condition, recalls the description of a chronically impotent man at Catullus 67.21–22, a poem also written – like *Amores* 3.7 and unlike Catullus 50 – in the elegiac meter. A personified female house door, “interviewed” by the poet-speaker about the behavior of the house’s residents, provides this description. When characterizing the first husband of her former mistress, she denies that he was in a sexually functioning state, by claiming, in figurative language, that *languidior tenera cui pendens sacula beta/numquam se mediam sustulit ad tunicam*, his “little dagger, dangling more limp than a tender beet, never raised itself to the middle of his tunic.”

Furthermore, as scholars have observed, Ovid’s statement about his previous, successful sexual performances at *Amores* 3.7.23–26 evoke a statement made by Catullus at 32.7–8. There, proposing an “afternoon delight” to a female addressee, Ipitilla, Catullus requests, in sexually explicit terms, *domi maneat paresque nobis/novem continuas fututiones*, “may you stay at home and prepare nine non-stop fuckings for us.” Catullus then adds, in lines 10–11 a description of his sexual readiness, *supinus/pertundo tunicamque palliumque*, “lying on my back I thrust through my tunic and cloak.”

Here Ovid relates, in more euphemistic language, that “nuper bis flava Chlide, ter candida Pitho,/ter Libas officio continuata meo est:/exigere a nobis angusta nocte Corinnam/me memini numeros sustinuisse novem” (“recently blonde-haired Chlide was kept satisfied by my functioning two successive times, shining Pitho and Libas three times each; I remember that in a brief night Corinna demanded from me and that I held up for nine numbers”). With the verb form *continuata* as well as the number nine Ovid calls Catullus’ request to mind, but with some important differences. He claims to have bested Catullus by having already delivered, to his longtime beloved Corinna, what Catullus merely promises, and to a woman he never mentions elsewhere (and to have satisfied three other women in addition).

Catullus 32, like Catullus 50, is in the hendecasyllabic, not the elegiac, meter. Catullus does not compare his *dramatis personae* in 32, 50 or the elegiac poem 67 to figures of

Greek and Roman myth. Furthermore, Catullus' verses that feature him as their poet-speaker never represent him as experiencing physical sexual failure. But other Catullan poems in the elegiac meter liken the individuals featured therein to mythological figures, chief among them the aforementioned 68: it compares Lesbia to Laodamia, wife of the Greek warrior Protesilaus, and Catullus himself to Juno, patiently enduring the infidelities of her husband Jupiter. So, too, Catullus frequently depicts himself as deeply disappointed, even emotionally distraught, in his love affair with Lesbia. Ovid echoes the language of these depictions as well. Most notably, at *Amores* 3.14.39, with *tunc amo, tunc odi*, Ovid recalls the opening words of Catullus' most renowned words of emotional anguish, *odi et amo*, from a two-line poem in the elegiac meter, 85. We will return to *Amores* 3.14 in our discussion of Sulpicia; in its second line Ovid represents himself as wretched (*misero ... mihi*, 2) over the indiscreet conduct of an unnamed female lover, who flaunts her sexual misbehavior in public.

Ovid's representation of his sexual failure in *Amores* 3.7 also recalls earlier poems in the elegiac couplet by Propertius and Tibullus. Both describe the physical performances of their poet-speakers in the context of describing emotional disappointment in love, and both compare themselves to Greek mythic personages in so doing. In 2.22, Propertius boasts about his past displays of sexual prowess, stating, at lines 23–24, *saepe est experta puella/officium tota nocte valere meum*, "a girl has often learned from experience that my sexual functioning stays strong for the entire night." As noted, Ovid uses three of these words in *Amores* 3.7: the nouns *officium* and *nocte* when referring to his own, previous successful sexual performances in lines 24–25; the verb *valent*, from *valere*, when depicting the erotic vigor of his re-energized organ in line 67.

To be sure, immediately before priding himself on his erotic indefatigability, Propertius asserts at 2.22.21–23, that physical lovemaking has not required any effort on his part. At lines 25 ff. he implicitly likens himself to the god Jupiter, who extended his one night of love with Alcmena to two, as well as to the Greek mythic heroes Achilles and Hector; he then proclaims, at line 36, that one love will not suffice for him (*sic etiam nobis una puella parum est*). Nevertheless, Propertius' final message in 2.22 indicates that his willingness to serve more than one sexual partner involves a fear of rejection. For he states in lines 37–40 that "if one woman does not allow a place for me, let another woman hold and warm me with her desirous limbs; or if a woman should perchance have been made angry over my sexual service, let her know that there is another woman who would like to be mine" (*altera me cupidis teneat foveatque lacertis, / altera si quando non sinit esse locum; / aut si forte irata meo sit facta ministro / ut sciat esse aliam, quae velit esse mea!*").

Amores 3.7 evokes Propertius 2.22 in also portraying the hypothetical amatory situation Propertius describes, but as an embarrassing erotic reality for Ovid: the nameless, dissatisfied female partner of Ovid's poet-speaker here actually, and hurriedly, abandons him. Propertius' equation of his physical erotic fortitude to that of mythic heroes in 2.22, like Ovid's insistence that his sexual disability was merely temporary, seeks to compensate for rejection and failure. In likening himself to figures from the mythic past much as Propertius does in 2.22, Ovid also asserts that he actually experienced what was only a hypothetical possibility for Propertius: at lines 19–20 Propertius swears that he will never be blind to beautiful women even if the fate of the blind bard Thamyras should befall him. At lines 59–62 Ovid recalls that his partner's kisses were worthy of arousing

those who were “living and men” (*vivosque virosque*) but that he was “neither alive nor a man,” as he was previously (*sed neque tum vixi nec vir, ut ante, fui*), then concludes: “what good is a painted tablet to poor Thamyras?”

In *Amores* 3.7 Ovid also evokes Tibullus’ portrayal of his own, past temporary impotence at 1.5.39 ff. There Tibullus relates “saepe aliam tenui: sed iam cum gaudia adirem,/admonuit dominae deseruitque Venus./Tunc me discedens devotum femina dixit,/a pudet, et narrat scire nefanda meam” (“Often I held another woman in my embrace: but when I was approaching the moment of joys, Venus reminded me of my mistress and abandoned me. Then the woman, departing, said that I had been bewitched. Oh it shames me, and she spreads the story that my beloved knows unspeakable skills”). Several of the same words figure in Ovid’s poem: *tenui*, “I held”, in line 3; *pudet*, “it shames”, in 19; forms of the verb *devovere*, “to bewitch”, in 27 and 80.

Just as Tibullus portrays this “other woman” as claiming that his “regular” beloved, Delia, has bewitched him, and then departing, so Ovid represents his partner as asserting, before her departure, “either a poison-concocting Circe bewitches (*devovet*) you ... or you come to me exhausted from another love-making session.” Tibullus concludes this passage by maintaining, in lines 43–44, that his beloved bewitches him (*devovet*) not with words but with her beautiful physical features. Then, at 45–46, he compares her appeal to the allure of the divine mother for the mortal father of the Homeric hero Achilles: “Such was the sea-blue Nereid Thetis once conveyed on a bridled fish to Peleus of Haemonia.”

By having his own, dissatisfied, female partner compare his own mistress to a goddess who was known not only as a drug-dispensing witch, but also for her extra-marital coupling with another Homeric hero, Ovid humorously recalls and deflates Tibullus’ extravagant, laudatory analogy between his beloved and this mythic sea-goddess, and between himself and her bridegroom. Yet Ovid humorously deflates himself in comparison to Tibullus as well. Tibullus euphemistically portrays himself as losing his erection right before reaching sexual climax, because he had his mistress on his mind. Ovid, however, represents himself as never managing to achieve an erection at all, and as not giving his mistress a thought at the time (and only mentioning her in this poem as proof that he and she have achieved the sexual performance record promised by Catullus to Ipsitilla in 32).

But like Ovid’s admission of temporary sexual failure in *Amores* 3.7 itself, and like Ovid’s representation of himself as actually undergoing what Propertius portrays in 2.22 as hypothetical, humiliating erotic circumstances, Ovid’s portrayal of his poet-speaker as lacking Tibullus’ potency (as well as Tibullus’ understandable excuse for losing it) has an important literary function. These details establish and certify him as an elegiac poet following and competing with his predecessors in the same genre by working with, and cleverly modifying, themes and tropes they had previously deployed. At the same time such details explicitly acknowledge a major message of Latin love elegy itself: that the enterprise of love, the main topic explored and extolled by this genre, abounds in emotional and physical difficulties for the male lover. By including realistic and supposedly autobiographical details along with mythological analogies and other fictional elements, by blurring the distinction between the scenarios in which they place their poet-speakers and their own actual amatory experiences, and by alluding to the writing of love poetry

as they do both, these male elegists can simultaneously claim and distance themselves from the pain and embarrassment that love can bring. They can also share the experience of erotic disappointment and humiliation with their male and female readers, in a distanced and distancing way.

These passages about male physical erotic failure warrant close examination because Ovid himself connects the literary genre of Latin love elegy with male sexual performance in the very first poem of his *Amores*, 1.1. Indeed, he calls attention to, and strengthens, that connection in *Amores* 3.7 by his strategic redeployment of two nouns – *numerus* and *modus* – from that early programmatic text. In *Amores* 3.7 he uses both words to describe sexual acts and positions: at line 18, with “since my young manhood itself is lacking its own measures” (*numerus*); in 26, with its reference to the nine performances (*numeros*) he managed with Corinna; and in 64, with “what sexual positions (*modos*) did I not imagine and plan?” But at *Amores* 1.1.27–28, they signify the constituent poetic measures of elegy and epic poetry when Ovid resigns himself to writing the former rather than the latter: “Sex mihi surgat opus numeris, in quinque residat:/ferrea cum vestris bella valete modis” (“Let my work rise in six metrical units and sink back in five: farewell, iron wars with your meters”). By using *numerus* and *modus* in these two different ways, Ovid figuratively associates what it takes to make love with what it takes to make love poetry.

Furthermore, earlier in *Amores* 1.1, at lines 17–18, Ovid represents the elegiac couplet as itself functioning specifically in the fashion of a male organ through his use of such sexually charged words as the verb *surgere*, “to rise”, and the noun *nervus*, “muscular bodily part.” Here he states, “Cum bene surrexit versu nova pagina primo, / attenuat nervos proximus ille meos,” “when the new page rose up well with its first line of verse, that next one diminished my muscular parts.” He thereby characterizes the elegiac meter as (in contrast to, say, the hendecasyllables of Catullus 32 and 50) alternatively soaring and sinking, like the physical equipment, alternatively turgid and detumescent, that men require to perform acts of love. He also acknowledges that, like the mechanical rhythms of lovemaking itself, love has its ups and downs, physiological as well as emotional. This assertion paves the way for such elegies as *Amores* 3.7, which literally features a “down” moment: a temporary physical disability with a woman other than the regular partner of the poet-speaker, but an instance of erotic failure nonetheless.

Constructing Female Authorial Identity in Latin Love Elegy

In situating and credentialing herself as a Latin elegiac poet, Sulpicia – like her fellow male elegists – represents herself as at times experiencing erotic disappointment and indeed failure. In 3.16 she confronts her lover about his interest in another woman, vividly described as “shamefully clad in a whore’s toga,” and “a partner for hire loaded with a wool basket”; in 3.18 she regrets having left her lover alone the preceding night, “desiring to hide [her] blazing passion.” But she does not (and cannot) portray her own physical failure to achieve erection and orgasm, much less link her choice of poetic meter

to the sexual rhythms of male performance. Nor, in exploring the complexities of her erotic plight, can she evoke and rewrite descriptions of male sexual performance, unsuccessful and successful, provided by earlier male poets.

Still, Sulpicia constructs a distinctive poetic identity for herself in the fashion of her fellow male elegists, by utilizing learned mythological references, allusions to poetry itself, and evocations of earlier literary works treating erotic topics. In 3.13, for example, she announces, "Venus of Cythera, won over by the poems that my Roman Muses inspired, has brought my lover to me and dropped him in my embrace." Here she refers to the goddess Venus merely by the erudite epithet *Cytherea*, "from the island of Cythera" and to the goddesses who inspire her own, Latin, poetry by a similarly erudite term, *Camenae*, "Roman Muses." Along with employing the language of learned, Hellenistically-inspired poetry, she credits her own previous poems for her erotic good fortune. With these words, too, Sulpicia associates her own erotic circumstances with those of Homer's Helen in *Iliad* 3.380 ff. There the goddess Aphrodite extricates Helen's lover Paris from the toils of single combat against Helen's husband Menelaus, and deposits him in Helen's bedchamber, where they make love.

Yet Homer portrays Helen as faulting Aphrodite for re-uniting her with Paris, when she criticizes Paris as inferior to Menelaus and expresses regret over her liaison with him. Sulpicia, by way of contrast, represents herself as not only grateful to the goddess of love, but also gratified by her love affair, and thereby more erotically successful than the mythic Helen. What is more, in this same poem Sulpicia also associates her own erotic circumstances with those of another, mythic character from earlier, Roman epic poetry, Vergil's Dido in *Aeneid* 4. Again Sulpicia does so to represent herself as enjoying greater erotic success than her mythic model, in this instance because she herself has openly rejected conventional Roman moral standards.

For Sulpicia proclaims, in the final couplet of 3.13, that she delights in having misbehaved, *peccasse iuvat*. In both the first and final couplets she uses a word that figures prominently in Vergil's portrait of Dido – *fama*, "rumor", "reputation" – when celebrating her own misbehavior. She initially states that the rumor (*fama*) of having covered up her passion (*texisse*) would cause her more shame than the rumor that she has lain it bare (*nudasse*); she later asserts that it wearies her to wear a false expression for the sake of her reputation (*fama*). But whereas Sulpicia dismisses *fama*, a reputation for sexual misbehavior, as inconsequential to her pursuit of erotic pleasure, Dido is portrayed as suffering tragically from its consequences. Her illicit liaison with Aeneas provokes *Fama*, Rumor personified, to destroy her reputation for moral rectitude; her loss of *fama*, after Aeneas abandons her, then provokes her to take her own life.

To be sure, the male love elegists frequently liken themselves to figures from earlier Greek myth too. Sulpicia, however, differs from them in an important regard. Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid also help credential themselves as amatory literary authorities by evoking the simultaneously realistic and fictionalized self-representations of their fellow Roman male love poets. Through acknowledgments of their own erotic failures and successes alike, and of the physical and emotional difficulties love invariably entails, they thereby compete with the erotic and poetic performances of these predecessors. But Sulpicia's self-representations evoke, rewrite, and vie solely with earlier representations of totally fictional female figures in male-authored poetic texts. These evocations also

portray her as more erotically successful than these fictional women: not only Helen and Dido in 3.13, but also Dido in 3.9.

Nevertheless, the aforementioned autobiographical details in Sulpicia's elegies – chief among them the request in 3.14 that her kinsman Messalla allow her to celebrate her birthday in the city, and the reference in 3.16 to her father's *praenomen* Servius when asserting her socially-elevated status – add a powerful element of realism to her representation of herself as both lover and poet. It merits emphasis that she shares the detail about her father's name when describing a moment of amatory disappointment, caused by her lover's preference for a lowborn rival. As we have observed, moreover, Sulpicia seeks to foreground the autobiographical dimension of her poetry with her claim that she is revealing rather than concealing the truth about her erotic experiences. Her statement in 3.13, "let anyone tell of my joys if they will be said to have been without joys of their own," encourages her readers to experience her erotic pleasures vicariously, and to share them with others. It foregrounds the autobiographical dimension of her poetry, too, in providing her readers with surrogate, meaningful pleasures.

As we have observed as well, none of the male Roman love elegists mentions Sulpicia by name, even Ovid in his roster of earlier poets who also wrote about illicit love. But in *Amores* 3.14 Ovid's poet-speaker appears to evoke Sulpicia's poetry when criticizing an unnamed woman who has hurt his feelings by revealing rather than concealing her sexual misbehavior with men other than himself. What is more, his four different references – in lines 16, 25, 29 and 46 – to his addressee's words, *verba*, suggest that she is a poet. The numerous verbal and thematic similarities between Ovid's poem and several of Sulpicia's elegies even suggest that he may be addressing Sulpicia herself in the *persona* of her emotionally-wounded lover, or at least gently rebuking Sulpicia's celebration of her love affair in 3.13. For the speaker of *Amores* 3.14 repeatedly employs such key words from that poem as *fama* and *peccare* in pleading with her to deny her sexual misbehavior in public, and begging her to spare him if she hesitates to spare her *fama*.

If Ovid is criticizing Sulpicia in this poem, he is, of course, faulting her for adopting a literary strategy that foregrounds autobiographical and realistic detail far more than Ovid and his fellow male elegiac poets do when they explore and share erotic experience. He criticizes her, moreover, because of the personal pain and public humiliation that such detailed disclosures by a female love poet bring to the men who do not monopolize her sexual favors. Needless to say, Ovid is voicing a double literary as well as sexual standard. As we have seen, he and his fellow male elegists represent themselves as sexually involved with women other than their "regular" *inamoratae*, sometimes although by no means always, with disastrous erotic consequences. And whether or not Ovid is specifically criticizing Sulpicia in this poem, its words testify that fictionalizing itself functions as a crucial representative strategy in writing about love precisely because it enables poets to write about their erotic disappointments and failures. But although too much autobiography, too much realism, in love elegy may cause pain to poets and readers alike, they also – as Sulpicia's elegies testify – confer amatory authority on its poets, and add to the appeal and immediacy of love elegy for its readers.

(All translations from the Latin are my own.)

FURTHER READING

Maria Wyke, *The Roman Mistress: Ancient and Modern Representations* (Oxford 2007), includes five of her earlier essays about the representation of women in elegy, among them “Written Women: Propertius’ *Scripta Puella*,” originally published in 1987. Roy Gibson, “Love Elegy,” in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, ed. Stephen Harrison (Malden, Oxford and Carlton 2005) 159–173, does not discuss the writings of Sulpicia. He summarizes the arguments of various scholars, chief among them Wyke, for privileging the literary and fictional dimensions of Latin love elegiac scenarios, minimizing their autobiographical and realistic elements, viewing the Latin love elegists as socially alienated, and interpreting the females in love elegy as fictitious figures who often symbolize love elegy itself. These arguments respond to discussions by earlier scholars who regard the male Latin love elegists as critiquing contemporary Roman gender relations and socio-cultural values, such as Judith P. Hallett, “The Role of Women in Roman Elegy: Counter-Cultural Feminism,” *Women in the Ancient World: The Arethusa Papers*, ed. J. Peradotto and J. P. Sullivan (Albany 1984) 241–264; first published in 1973).

T. P. Wiseman, *Catullan Questions* (Leicester 1969), *Cinna the Poet and Other Essays* (Leicester 1974) and especially *Catullus and His World* (Cambridge 1985) treat in great detail the ancient evidence and modern arguments for identifying Catullus’ Lesbia as Clodia Metelli, and identifying Perilla/Metella as Clodia’s daughter; Hallett also addresses the issue of whether or not “Lesbia” was herself a poet in “Catullus and Horace on Roman Women Poets,” *Antichthon* 40 (2006) 65–88.

The definitive study of the Gallus-papyrus is R. D. Anderson, P. J. Parsons and R. G. M. Nisbet, “Elegiacs by Gallus from Qasr Ibrim,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 69 (1979) 125–155. Recent work on Sulpicia includes David Roessel, “The Significance of the Name Cerinthus in the Poems of Sulpicia,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 120 (1990) 243–250; Alison Keith, “*Tandem Venit Amor*: A Roman Woman Speaks of Love,” in Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner, eds., *Roman Sexualities* (Princeton 1997) 295–310; Hallett, “The Eleven Elegies of the Augustan Elegist Sulpicia,” in L. J. Churchill, P. R. Brown, and J. E. Jeffrey, eds., *Women Writing Latin: From Roman Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*. Vol. I: *Women Writing Latin in Roman Antiquity: Late Antiquity and the Early Christian Era* (New York and London 2002) 45–65; Mathilde Skoie, *Reading Sulpicia: Commentaries 1475–1990* (Oxford and New York 2002); Hallett, “Sulpicia and Her Resistant Intertextuality,” in Danielle van Mal-Maeder, Alexandre Burnier, and Loreta Núñez, eds., *Jeu de Voix. Enonciation, intertextualité et intentionnalité dans la littérature antique* (Bern 2009) 141–155. Keith draws significant connections between Sulpicia’s self-representation and Vergil’s Dido; Hallett (2009) argues for Ovid, *Amores* 3.14 as a response to Sulpicia 3.13. For Ovid, *Amores* 3.7 and its evocations of Catullus and Tibullus, see now Niklas Holzberg, “Ovid, *Amores* 3.7: A Poem Between Two Genres,” *Latomus* 68.4 (2009) 933–940.

CHAPTER 18

The *Domina* in Roman Elegy

Alison Keith

Writing towards the end of the first century CE, the epigrammatist Martial catalogues the canonical Roman writers of erotic verse and their mistresses (*Epigr.* 8.73.5–10):

Cynthia made you a poet, wanton Propertius; beautiful Lycoris was Gallus' inspiration; fair Nemesis is the glory of clear-voiced Tibullus; Lesbia recited to you, learned Catullus; neither the Paelignians nor Mantua will spurn my verse, if I find some Corinna or Alexis.

(All translations mine unless otherwise noted.)

The Flavian poet here situates his own wanton Muse not in the tradition of Hellenistic Greek epigram (as he does elsewhere) but rather in a native Latin tradition of erotic elegy, to which he also assimilates Vergil's *Bucolics*. Autobiographical in form, Latin erotic elegy records the speaker's love for a beautiful, usually unavailable, woman who is celebrated under a Greek pseudonym. The elegiac mistresses Martial names – Propertius' Cynthia, Gallus' Lycoris, Tibullus' Nemesis, Catullus' Lesbia, and (Ovid's) Corinna – occupy pride of place in their poets' amatory collections and are variously addressed in the poems as *domina* ("mistress"), *puella* ("girlfriend"), *uita* ("life") and *lux* ("light"). Speculation concerning the identity of the women behind the pseudonyms started in antiquity, apparently encouraged by the poets themselves.

Catulli Lesbia

C. Valerius Catullus (c. 84–54 BCE) sets the precedent for the naming practices of the Augustan elegists by concealing the identity of his beloved behind a pseudonym, Lesbia, which evokes the Greek poet Sappho. But he seems to invite his readers to identify her

as a Roman aristocrat named Clodia in an epigram (c. 79) that names her brother, Lesbius, by his cognomen Pulcher (“pretty boy”):

Lesbius is a Pulcher/pretty boy. Why not – since Lesbia prefers him to you and your whole family, Catullus. But nonetheless, this pretty boy would sell Catullus, along with his family, if he could find three friends’ kisses.

Few readers have been able to resist the invitation of these lines to biographical speculation. Indeed, the challenge posed by Catullus was taken up already in antiquity, as a passage in the *Apologia* of the second-century CE orator and philosopher Apuleius shows (*Apologia* 10):

But in the same manner let my opponents accuse Gaius Catullus because he names Lesbia for Clodia; and Tigidius, similarly because he wrote *Perilla* when she was Metella; and Propertius, who says Cynthia to conceal Hostia; and Tibullus because he loved Plania in his heart, Delia in his verse.

T. P. Wiseman (1969, 51–2) has considered the evidentiary basis from which the imperial author might have drawn his information. He traces the information Apuleius here purveys back through the imperial biographer Suetonius’ *De scortis illustribus* (“On Famous Prostitutes”) to a work by Hyginus, the second director of Augustus’ Palatine Library and a friend of Ovid’s, *De uita rebusque illustrium uirorum* (“On the Life and Accomplishments of Famous Men”) and concludes that, given Apuleius’ extensive knowledge of Republican literature, his statement is inherently plausible. The little that we can verify independently, on the basis of Catullus’ epigram (c. 79), has been taken to confirm the accuracy of Apuleius’ report.

For Pulcher was a cognomen of a politically prominent branch of the Claudian *gens* in this period, and it has therefore been thought that Catullus here provides the *cleft* to his verse *roman*, by naming Lesbius as Clodius Pulcher and, by implication, Lesbia as a Clodia. Clodius Pulcher had three sisters, but identifying which one was Catullus’ Lesbia has exercised considerable prosopographical ingenuity over the years, because Roman onomastic practice was for women to bear only the feminine form of the family name. Thus each of Clodius Pulcher’s sisters bore the name Clodia, and they could only be distinguished from one another by the addition of their husband’s family name in the possessive form. The current scholarly consensus is to accept the traditional identification of Catullus’ Lesbia with Clodia Metelli, “Metellus’ wife,” on the basis of Cicero’s attack on her in defense of his young protégé M. Caelius Rufus in a court-case of 56 BCE (*Pro Caelio*), since Catullus’ poetry mentions a rival for Lesbia’s love, variously called Caelius and Rufus (Dyson 2007; Dyson Hejduk 2008). A surviving fragment of a speech by Caelius himself illuminates the erotic appeal of the historical Clodia Metelli, describing her as a “fourpenny Clytemnestra, [dressed] Coan in the dining room, [but] Nolan [i.e., unwilling] in the bedroom” (Cael. *apud* Quint. *Inst. Or.* 8.6.53, with Hillard 1981). Since Coan silk was almost transparent (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.101–3), it advertised the wearer’s sexual availability.

Catullus introduces his “girl” (*puella*, c. 2.1; 3.3, 4, 17) early in the collection as it has come down to us, in two famous poems about the death of her pet sparrow, whose

fun and games with his “mistress” (*domina*, c. 3.10) suggest the human lovers’ amatory pleasures. He names her Lesbia in two nearby poems (c. 5.1, 7.2) that ask how many of her kisses could ever sate her crazy lover. But already by the eighth poem, Catullus expresses a desire to break with his girl (*puella*, c. 8.4, 7, 12) and in the eleventh poem, he asks friends to inform her of his renunciation of love (c. 11.15–16): “announce a few words, not good ones, to my girlfriend” (*puella*). The movement of the opening cycle of Lesbia poems through erotic play, amatory rapture, and disillusioned rupture then recurs throughout the polymetrics (c. 1–60) and beyond. Indeed, the shadow of the bitter final break articulated in c. 11 hangs over the whole *corpus* to lend tragic depth to the Lesbia cycle, not only in the lyric poems but also in the marriage poems (c. 61–64) and in the elegiac *libellus* that rounds out the collection as we have it (c. 65–116).

The opening poem of the elegiac collection sets out the controlling themes of this section as love and loss, in relation to the poet’s brother, mistress, and friends. Poem 68, generally regarded as Catullus’ elegiac masterpiece, locates the poet at his family home in Verona in the aftermath of his brother’s death in the Troad (c. 68.1–40) and offers a poem of thanks to a friend for making available to him and his mistress a house in which to pass a night of love (c. 68.41–160). Lesbia (unnamed in the poem) enters the borrowed house, *domus*, as the poet-lover’s mistress, *domina* (c. 68.67–74):

He opened a closed field with a broad path and he gave a house to me and my mistress, at which we could indulge our mutual love. There my shining goddess went with a soft step and setting her gleaming sole on the well worn threshold she stood with ringing sandal, as once Laodamia came to Protesilaus’ house, ablaze with love.

Catullus’ friend thereby endows Catullus’ girlfriend with a household and thus invents, as far as we can tell, the amatory metaphor of *servitium amoris*, the “slavery of love,” for the Latin word *domina* denotes a woman in charge of the household slaves, a property owner (*OLD* s.v. 1). By contrast, the comparison of his mistress to a shining goddess, worthy of comparison to the mythological heroine Laodamia, is standard amatory fare, though at the end of the poem the speaker admits that such sublime comparisons fall short of the tawdry domestic details. For while Laodamia enters her husband’s home on the occasion of their marriage (c. 68.73–84), Lesbia meets the poet-lover at a borrowed house over whose threshold she stumbles unluckily (c. 68.71–2), no bride (c. 68.131–34) but an adulterous wife (c. 68.143–6), whose indulgence in extramarital affairs aligns her with Jupiter rather than Juno, the goddess of marriage (c. 68.135–40).

The elegiac mistress of Catullus’ c. 68 is succeeded by the mature woman (*mulier*, c. 70.1) of the epigrams (Dyson 2007), whose betrayal (c. 72, 75) provokes the poet-lover’s intense misery (c. 76, 85) but who is, apparently, ultimately reconciled with him (c. 86, 87, 92, 107, 109). If poem 68 offers the most sublime expression of Catullus’ tormented passion, the epigrams integrate lover and beloved in the social and political world of the Roman upper classes. Thus c. 72 shockingly articulates Catullus’ erotic love for Lesbia in the affective language of Roman patrilineal and social relationships:

At one time, Lesbia, you used to say that you knew Catullus alone, nor wanted to hold Jove before me. I loved you then not like the common crowd loves a girlfriend, but as a father loves his sons and sons-in-law. Now I know you; therefore, although I burn more immoderately, nonetheless you are much cheaper and shallower to me. How can that be, you ask? Because such an injury compels a lover to love the more but to wish well the less.

Outraged and hurt by Lesbia's betrayal – which he refers to as her injury to him (*c.* 72.7) and fault (*c.* 75.1) – Catullus prays for release from his love as if from a morbid disease (*c.* 76.17–26):

O gods, if you have any pity, or if ever you bore to anyone the ultimate aid, already in death itself, look at me in my wretchedness and, if I have lived purely, snatch from me this plague and pestilence, which creeping like a numbness through my inmost limbs, has cast forth happiness from my whole breast. I do not ask in return that she love me back or, something that is not possible, that she wish to be chaste: I myself wish to be well and to lay down this foul disease. O gods, grant me this for my righteousness.

Catullus here sets in play the metaphor of love as an illness, known already to Sappho (fr. 31) and earlier treated by Catullus himself in his adaptation of her poem (*c.* 51). But in this elegy he adapts the metaphor in the Roman social context of the proper observance of ritual relations with the gods. With striking irony, the poet makes his plea on the basis of an adulterous relationship (cf. *c.* 68). In so doing, he establishes a framework that subsequent Latin elegists will make conventional to the genre.

Also conventional to the genre, though honed to minimalist perfection, is Catullus' expression of the lover's emotional torment in the grip of unrequited love (*c.* 85): "I hate and I love. How can I do that, perhaps you will ask? I don't know, but I feel it happening and it's torturing me." This anatomy of the lover's torment is succeeded by a pithy statement of the mistress' charms, detailed in contrast to those of an acknowledged beauty (*c.* 86):

Quintia is beautiful to many. To me, she is fair, tall, straight: thus I confirm these details. I deny that the whole package is beautiful: for there is no charm, no speck of wit in so large a body. Lesbia is beautiful, who is not only superlatively beautiful all over, but has also, uniquely, stolen all the charms from all women.

T. D. Papanghelis (1991) has demonstrated that this epigram encodes a powerful literary statement in its association of Lesbia with the critical terminology of neoteric poetics (*uenustas, sal*) and, by extension, with the elegiac poetics espoused by the Alexandrian poet Callimachus, whose *Aetia* Prologue delineates a contrast between rival poetic styles symbolized by women (*Aet.* fr. 1.9–12 M). For Catullus here uses the term *uenustas*, "charm," in the sense of "modesty of size and slenderness of form, which are central preoccupations of the Neoteric-Callimachean poetics" (Papanghelis 1991, 385). A preference for the charming and dainty Lesbia over the tall Quintia thus pointedly recalls Callimachus' expression of disdain for "the tall woman" (or long poem) in the *Aetia* Prologue and his espousal of the sweetness of a more modestly sized woman/poem. Catullus thus also seems to be responsible for naturalizing in Latin elegy the Hellenistic delineation of a poetic project in the metaphor of female anatomy (Wyke 2002).

Galli Lycoris

C. Cornelius Gallus (70/69–27/26 BCE) links the experimental poets of Catullus' circle to Vergil and Propertius in the second generation of so-called "Neoteric poets" at Rome. A man of letters, successful general, friend of both the young Octavian and the young Vergil, Gallus was the protégé of the Hellenistic Greek poet Parthenius, who dedicated to him a prose handbook of mythological tales of *Erotic Sufferings* in order to provide him with material for his poetry, of which the most famous were his four books of love poems, *Amores*, which are no longer extant. His elegies apparently celebrated a love affair with a woman whom he calls by the name of Lycoris ("Apollo's girl"), a feminized form of the cult-title of Apollo Lycoreus at Delphi. According to Vergil's late antique commentator Servius (on *Buc.* 10.1, 6), the woman's real name was Cytheris ("Aphrodite's girl"), itself a stage-name of the mime-actress Volumnia, freedwoman of P. Volumnius Eutrapelus and mistress of Antony during the period 49–46 BCE.

Only ten lines remain of Gallus' *Amores*, but they provide tantalizing evidence concerning the Roman elite's competition in this period for erotic and literary success. A papyrus fragment (*P.Qasr Ibrîm* inv. 78–3–11/1) discovered in 1978 in the fortress of Qasr Ibrîm in Egyptian Nubia was recognized as Gallan in authorship, by the reference to Lycoris in the first legible line (Gallus fr. 145 Hollis):

Sad ..., Lycoris, because of your misbehavior. My fate will then be sweet, Caesar, when you are the greatest part of Roman history and after your return I shall see the temples of many gods the wealthier, decorated with the spoils of your campaigns ... at last the Muses have fashioned poems worthy for me to be able to utter of my mistress ... the same I do not fear for you, Viscus ... though you be judge, Cato.

(Translation from Hollis 2007)

Scholars have debated everything about these lines, including how many poems they represent. Like many, I accept the suggestion of the first editors of the papyrus that lines 2–5 and 6–9 constitute two short self-contained epigrams, while the first line forms the conclusion of an elegy of unknown length. Of particular interest is Gallus' apparently programmatic characterization of his mistress' "misbehavior" (*nequitia*, 1) as the depravity of idleness (cf. Catullus' self-diagnosis in *c.* 51), and his expression of desire to compose poetry "worthy" of his mistress (*domina*, 7). His employment here of the Catullan term *domina* for his mistress is also striking and aligns his elegiac poetry with Catullus' amatory lyric and elegy, especially *c.* 68.

With the almost total loss of Gallus' *Amores*, Vergil's *Bucolics* provide the best evidence for the poetic course of the amatory relationship between Gallus and Lycoris. For in dedicating the final poem of the *Bucolics* to Gallus, Vergil undertakes to compose for his friend poems worthy of Lycoris (*V. Buc.* 10.2–3): "I must compose a few poems for my Gallus, but such as Lycoris herself might read; who could deny poems to Gallus?" His phrasing seems to echo Gallus' programmatic desire to utter poetry worthy of his mistress (quoted above). But rather than referring to Lycoris as Gallus' *domina*, Vergil calls her his *cura* ("care" and, by extension, "a person constituting an object of care", s.v. *OLD* 8), apparently preserving Gallus' own bilingual pun on the Greek word for "girl," *koré* (*Verg. Buc.* 10.21–3): "Apollo came: 'Gallus, why are you mad?' he asked.

‘Your girlfriend (*tua cura*) Lycoris has followed another through snow and camps of shuddering cold’”.

Throughout the poem, Vergil represents Gallus’ faithless mistress Lycoris as abandoning him in order to follow a new lover (*Buc.* 10.46–9):

You, far away from the fatherland (nor let me credit such a thing) see Alpine snow and the harsh cold of the Rhine – alas! – alone without me. Alas, may the cold not harm you! Alas, may the rough ice not cut your tender feet!

Indeed, Servius explicitly attributes these three lines, describing Lycoris crossing the Alps in the company of a rival lover-soldier on campaign, to Gallus’ *Amores*. Full of the programmatic language of Latin elegy, the passage characterizes Lycoris as physically delicate, her tender feet easily scarred by the rough ice of the Alps, but emotionally cold, well suited to the frigid landscape in which she accompanies her new paramour. Gallus thus seems to have crystallized the elegiac stylization of the faithless mistress as a harsh and unyielding figure, the *dura domina* of Augustan Latin elegy.

Cynthia Properti

Propertius’ first poem opens with the name of a woman who, in company with the love god Amor, presides over the elegiac speaker’s prostrate form (*Prop.* 1.1.1–4).

Cynthia first (*Cynthia prima*) captured me, wretch that I am, with her eyes; before, I’d been touched by no Desires. Then Love cast down my glance of stubborn arrogance and trampled my head beneath his feet.

The poet-lover represents himself in thrall to his beloved, whose beautiful eyes have captivated him, but her figure and character emerge only impressionistically. Cynthia does not reappear in elegy 1.1 but she is the focus of the following poem, in which a fuller portrait emerges (*Prop.* 1.2.1–6):

Why do you delight, my life, to walk out with your hair styled and rustle the slender folds of your Coan gown, or to drench your hair with Syrian myrrh and sell yourself with foreign gifts, marring your natural beauty by buying adornment and not allowing your limbs to glow with their innate charms?

The poet-lover praises Cynthia’s beauty extravagantly, though he specifies the details only of her dress and appurtenances – a fancy hairdo, expensive clothing, and exotic perfumes, all of which he characterizes, in the last line of the elegy, as luxury items which he wishes he could persuade her to forgo (1.2.31–2). Myrrh and Coan ‘silk’ were expensive eastern luxury imports at Rome, the former an Arabian commodity available through Syrian trade, the latter produced on the Greek island of Cos by spinning the filaments of a caterpillar similar to the Chinese silkworm. The luxury products of Cynthia’s toilette, like her unchaste life and Greek name, combine to characterize her as an expensive Greek courtesan (like Cytheris) or, perhaps, an independently wealthy woman of the Roman

elite kitted out as an expensive Greek courtesan, her identity concealed by a Greek pseudonym (like Clodia Metelli).

The passion and immediacy of the Cynthia elegies have long provoked interest amongst Propertius' readers in the autobiographical origins of his elegiac poetry, and he himself plays on public curiosity about the intimate details of a real love affair at the outset of his second book (Prop. 2.1.1–4):

You (pl.) ask from what source I so often drew my love poems and whence my book comes,
soft on the tongue. This poetry neither Calliope nor Apollo recites to me: my girlfriend
herself furnishes my inspiration.

Few readers have been able to resist the invitation of these lines to biographical speculation about Cynthia, her looks and her morals. The nineteenth century produced the most sustained efforts to reconstruct from Propertius' poems the course of his affair with Cynthia, but we have seen that the challenge was taken up already in antiquity (Apul. *Apol.* 10, quoted above). Apuleius' evidence is further illuminated by one of Horace's ancient commentators, who explains that literary pseudonyms have the same number of syllables as the name for which they substitute (ps.-Acro on Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.64). So too in Propertian and Gallan elegy (and Catullan lyric), the name Cynthia (like Cytheris and Lesbia) shares the same number of syllables as Hostia (Lycoris and Clodia), though modern commentators have been concerned by the potential for the name "Hostia" to behave differently from "Cynthia" in the same metrical context (Keith 2008).

Propertius here apparently denies poetic inspiration altogether, insisting on the primacy of his mistress' toilette and activities to spur his literary imagination. Nonetheless it is possible to trace clear debts to both Catullus and Gallus in Propertius' onomastic practice, which contradicts this disavowal of literary inspiration. His debt to Catullus, for example, emerges unambiguously later in the book in explicit invocations of Catullan precedent (2.25.1–4, 32.45–6) and in representations of Cynthia as a poet herself (1.3.41–4; 2.3.19–22) who rivals comparison with the Greek poets Sappho and Korinna (2.3.19–22). Significant too is Propertius' debt to the example of Gallus, for the name Cynthia, like Lycoris, is a feminized form of a cult title of the god Apollo Cynthius, divine patron of poetry (Call. *Hymn* 4.9–10; Verg. *Buc.* 6.3). Propertius thus endows his girlfriend with a name that bears an intensely literary resonance (Randall 1979).

Social historians and literary critics alike, moreover, have called into question whether the identification of a supposed historical girlfriend concealed behind Propertius' pseudonymous Cynthia can provide meaningful access to the historical woman and the circumstances of her life, let alone explain her literary significance in Propertius' poetry. Indeed, feminist critics have demonstrated that women enter classical literature as "gendered" objects of (mostly) male writing practices and have persuasively argued that such written women are further shaped by the literary genre in which their authors inscribe them (Gold 1993, Dixon 2001, Wyke 2002). Even if we accept the biographical speculations of historical and philological scholarship, therefore, it is incumbent upon us to explore Cynthia's symbolic import in Propertian elegy by considering carefully the literary valence of the themes and images with which our elegist associates her throughout his verse.

By describing his mistress stepping out in Coan raiment (1.2.2) and linking her Coan gown to his Coan verse (2.1.5–6), Propertius dresses Cynthia in Callimachean style from

the outset of his elegiac oeuvre, through an apparent allusion to Callimachus' praise of the Coan poet Philetas' elegiac verse (Call. fr. 532 Pf.). The allusion undermines historians' efforts to identify the social status of Cynthia/Hostia, for it appears that Coan dress is the mark not only of courtesans and wealthy Roman *matronae* but also of Cynthia's literary genealogy. Kathleen McNamee has pursued this insight to its logical conclusion in an analysis of Propertius' characterization of Cynthia in the first book, arguing that "Cynthia is in every detail an allegory for the kind of poetry that Propertius is willing to write" and that "all description of her is simultaneously a description of [Callimachean] poetics" (McNamee 1993, 224). For example, Propertius' use of the word *forma* to denote Cynthia's physical "appearance" (*OLD* s.v. 1) invites metaliterary interpretation, since the term also belongs to the critical register where it refers to "style" (of composition, *OLD* s.v. 10). If we bear this literary valence in mind we can appreciate our elegist's elevation of his mistress' *forma* above that of the mythological heroines of Greece (1.4.5–8) and Troy (1.19.13–16). In stylistic terms, he propounds the superiority of elegy over tragedy and epic.

Such a metatextual reading is facilitated by the ancient practice of identifying literary works by their opening word or phrase. Propertius' first collection of elegies will thus have circulated under the title of "Cynthia", the first word of the first poem (1.1.1). He plays with the double valence of Cynthia as both woman and text elsewhere in his first book, when he imagines writing her name on the bark of trees (1.18.21–2): "Ah! How often do my words resound under your delicate shadows, and Cynthia is written on your bark." Propertius self-consciously foregrounds his role as amatory elegist by inscribing "Cynthia" – both the name of his mistress and the title of his elegiac book – on tree-bark, the original writing material. McNamee observes that the same equation of Cynthia with Propertius' book of elegiac poetry also subtends the riddle at 1.11.26: "Cynthia was the cause" (*causa*). Here "the common noun *causa* is the Latin equivalent of the Greek noun *aitíon* and the passage thus refers to the *Aetia* of Callimachus, serving once again as a reminder of the poetic principles to which Propertius subscribes" (1993.224). Indeed his elegiac principles are embodied in his mistress (1.12.19–20): "It is right for me neither to love another woman nor to leave this one: Cynthia was the first, Cynthia will be the end." The echo of the book's *incipit*, *Cynthia prima* (1.1.1), here at the centre of the collection, fully coheres with the surface sense, that the elegiac speaker's love for Cynthia is the alpha and omega of his life; but it also confirms the programmatic implication that she is the central subject of his poetry.

Already in Book 1, Cynthia acts very much like her Catullan and Gallan models in the poet-lover's suspicion of her faithlessness and misbehavior. In the opening poem, Propertius implicitly compares her to the "unyielding (*dura*) daughter of Iaseus," Atalanta (1.1.10), and asks witches to change her mind (1.1.21) and make her pale from love (1.1.22), thereby figuring her as the *dura domina* of Gallan elegy; while in elegy 1.7, he contrasts his friend Ponticus' composition of epic poetry with his own elegiac life and poetry, in pursuit of a harsh mistress (1.7.5–6): "we, as is our custom, are working at our love affair, and seek some approach to a hard mistress" (*duram in dominam*). The Catullan metaphor of *servitium amoris* also figures prominently in Propertius' opening sequence of elegies. In elegy 1.4, for example, he asks his friend Bassus to leave him to pursue his accustomed life under the yoke of love's servitude (1.4.3–4, "why do you not suffer me to lead whatever life follows from this more accustomed slavery [*servitium*]?")

while in elegy 1.5, he threatens his friend Gallus (likely the poet) with enslavement to Cynthia if he wishes to follow Propertius' example (1.5.19–20): "then you will be compelled to learn our girl's heavy burden of slavery (*seruitium*) and what it may be to go away home, refused entry." In addition, we see here the first mention in extant elegy of the locked out lover's plight, in Propertius' reference to the excluded lover, whom the harsh mistress conventionally disdains to admit, leaving him to suffer the indignity of lingering on her threshold and lamenting at her locked door.

In elegy 1.8, moreover, the Propertian Cynthia rehearses the misbehavior of the faithless Lycoris as she contemplates following the poet-lover's rival to Illyria (1.8.1–8).

Are you mad, then, and does no concern for me delay you? Or am I worth less to you than icy Illyria? And does that fellow of yours, whoever he is, seem worth so much to you, that you would willingly go wherever the wind blows, without me? Will you be able to listen to the swell of the raging sea with courage, and lie in the hard berth of a ship? Will you be able to support settled hoarfrost with your tender feet, Cynthia, and endure the unaccustomed snow?

The elegy opens with a strongly drawn contrast between the "epic" landscape of frigid Illyria, to which the elegist's rival (apparently a military man and therefore an epic kind of character) is going by "hard" ship over the raging "sea" (more epic metaphors), and the elegiac mistress' dainty, not to say elegiac, figure in the form of her "tender" feet. Later in the poem, the elegist celebrates her decision to remain with him at Rome in equally programmatically-charged language (1.8.29–46), but there are reasons to doubt Cynthia's commitment to elegiac principle, for her original plan closely recalls Vergil's description of Gallus' faithless mistress crossing the Alps in the company of a military rival (V. *Buc.* 10.46–9, quoted above). Moreover, although Cynthia does not actually go to Illyria in 1.8, Propertius represents her in the following book as bestowing her favors on a wealthy *praetor*, recently returned from imperial service there (2.16.1–2): "The praetor has just come back from Illyrian lands, Cynthia, your greatest prize, my greatest worry."

Cynthia's faithlessness and misbehavior are intimately linked to her textualization for, as we have seen, she is at once mistress and book. Her textualization is central to her characterization in Book 2 (Wyke 2002), where Propertius promises to write epic once his mistress has been "written" (2.10.8) and reflects on the fame that the wide circulation of his "Cynthia" among contemporary Roman readers has brought him (2.24.1–2): "Do you talk like this when you are already a legend yourself because of your famous book, and your *Cynthia* is read all over the Forum?" While the poet-lover repeatedly professes his faithful service to Cynthia, both mistress and book, her infidelities to the lover increase in number as the poet's book circulates more widely. Indeed, the second collection as a whole exhibits a narrative progression from the poet-lover's literary and amatory success to an increasing disillusionment with the elegiac mistress/book, "Cynthia." For with the diffusion of Propertius' literary fame comes the promiscuity of his girlfriend. No longer incomparable and exquisite, she can be represented as sullied by contact with his readers, who are her admirers as much as his. The plot of amatory disillusionment and literary disengagement intensifies still further in the third book, which opens with the substitution of literary for amatory program in the 'Roman' elegies (3.1–5) and concludes with the poet-lover's final disavowal of his mistress

(and amatory elegy) because of her promiscuity (3.19, 21, 23–25). The literary renown that Cynthia's general circulation brings the poet-lover is thus an important factor to consider in his characterization of his promiscuous mistress/book (Fear 2000; Keith 2008).

In this regard, it is important to note that, although the opening lines of elegy 1.1 describe the poet-lover's passionate love for his mistress, the poem itself plays a wider function in the book since it is addressed to Propertius' patron (9–10): "by fleeing no tasks, Tullus, Milanion wore down the savagery of the harsh daughter of Iaseus." Cynthia, both the lover's mistress and the poet's book of elegies, is thereby subsumed into the gift presented to Tullus, who is the dedicatee of our poet's "single book" and the addressee not only of elegy 1.1 but also of elegies 1.6, 14, and 22, as well as the later 3.22. Within the collection, moreover, Cynthia circulates between Propertius and his friends Ponticus, Demophoon, Maecenas, among others. Thus, when he complains of his mistress' caprice, infidelity and promiscuity (in, e.g., 1.12, 15; 2.5, 6, 8, 9, 16, 32), we should recall that his own elegies release Cynthia into public circulation.

Nemesis Tibulli

Martial omits from his register of the elegists and their mistresses (8.73) the name of the mistress of Tibullus' first collection, Delia, although Apuleius includes her in his notice concerning the historical women who lay behind the love poets' pseudonyms (quoted above). Instead Martial mentions Nemesis, the mistress of Tibullus' second collection of elegies (8.73.75). Yet Tibullus' commemoration of different named mistresses in his two collections is a striking departure from earlier elegiac convention. Horace may offer implicit comment on Tibullus' comparative faithlessness in a contemporary lyric poem, addressed to an Albius who has been plausibly identified as the elegist Tibullus, which contrasts the advantages of lyric with the disadvantages of elegiac love (Hor. C. 1.33):

Albius, do not indulge in excessive sorrow, remembering your harsh Glycera, nor keep on uttering piteous elegies, asking why she has broken her faith and prefers a younger man to you. Love of Cyrus fires Lycoris, beautiful with her low forehead, while Cyrus turns his affections to harsh Pholoe; but she-goats will mate with Apulian wolves before Pholoe will sin with so base an adulterer. Thus it seems good to Venus, who delights in cruel mirth, to subject to her bronze yoke ill-matched figures and minds. When a better love wooed me, the freedwoman Myrtale, more passionate than the Adriatic's straits, which curves Calabrian bays, entangled me with her pleasing fetters.

Albius' mistress bears the speaking name Glycera, "Sweetie," which appears nowhere in extant Latin elegy but which, in conjunction with the adjective "harsh," sums up the arrogant appeal of the beautiful, but unyielding, elegiac mistress (*domina dura*). Both the names Lycoris and Pholoe, moreover, have antecedents in contemporary elegy, the former, as we have seen, the name of Gallus' mistress, the latter that of the harsh mistress of Tibullus' elegy 1.8, who cruelly disdains the love of the youth Marathus, himself the object of the Tibullan speaker's desire in elegies 1.4 and 1.9. The chain of unrequited desire, mocked by Horace in C. 1.33, constitutes a particularly neat image of Tibullus'

elegiac poetry, in which three love-objects feature: Delia and Marathus in Book 1, and Nemesis in Book 2.

Tibullus wears his learning and literary commitments more lightly than Propertius and Catullus in the idealized portrait he offers of his mistress Delia in Book 1, but Delia too bears a name that is a feminized form of a cult title of the god Apollo Delius, divine patron of poetry (Soph. *Aj.* 701, [Tib.] 3.6.8). In the opening elegy, Tibullus announces his modest ambition to enjoy a small crop and embrace his girlfriend (1.1.43–56):

A small crop is sufficient; it is sufficient to rest in bed if it is licit to refresh my limbs on their accustomed couch. How pleasing to hear savage winds while lying in bed and holding my mistress in a tender embrace or, when the winter winds have poured forth their cold waters, to follow sleep out of the delightful rain! May this befall me: may he be justly rich, who can endure the sea's rage and savage rains. O however much gold and emeralds there are, may they perish rather than any girl weep over our travels. It is fitting for you to war by land and sea, Messalla, that your house may vaunt enemy spoils: the chains of a beautiful girl hold me bound, and, her door-keeper, I sit before harsh doors.

By characterizing himself here as his mistress' door-keeper (a slave's position in the ancient Roman household), Tibullus extends the elegiac convention of *seruitium amoris*, while he adheres to the elegiac convention of *militia amoris* by contrasting his amatory service, in thrall to Delia, with military service under Messalla's command (1.1.53–6; cf. 1.1.73–8), which the ancient *vita* suggests he saw (cf. Tib. 1.3; 1.7; 2.6). Delia is thus aligned with the pursuit of erotic pleasure in the capital and contrasted with military service (1.1.45–52, 69–74).

Yet Tibullus also implies that it is precisely because elegiac women take an interest in gold and emeralds that Roman men go off to serve in the provinces. Perhaps, therefore, it is not surprising that Delia sends her poet-lover off with Messalla in elegy 1.3 (9–14):

Delia is nowhere, who – when she sent me from the City – is said to have consulted all the gods beforehand. Three times she lifted the boy's sacred lots: from all three, the boy replied to her that all was sure. All granted my return: nonetheless, she was in no wit deterred from weeping and looking back over my travels.

The echo of 1.1.52 in 1.3.14 forges a connection between the two poems and links Tibullus' departure on imperial service to his mistress' implied, if unexpressed, interest in the fabled wealth of the east. Her self-interest is seemingly confirmed in Tibullus' reverie of a pastoral Delia in elegy 1.5, where patron and *puella* meet in harmony at the poet-lover's rustic villa (1.5.31–6).

Here my Messalla will come, for whom Delia may pluck sweet fruits from chosen trees: and, holding so great a man in awe, let her busily take care of him, for him prepare and bear him banquets, herself his serving attendant. This I dreamt and prayed for, which now East Wind and South toss over all Armenia's scented land.

The appeal of Armenia's perfumes to the wealthy upper classes provides a particular geographical context for Tibullus' reference to the site where his prayers for Delia's love dissipate. Moreover, the luxury products which Armenia sent to Rome complement

Tibullus' fantasy of Delia's obsequious service to his grand friend, Messalla, in the larger context of the elegy, where he denounces a wealthy rival's enjoyment of her favors (Tib. 1.5.47–8): "the fact that a rich lover has now appeared, the crafty bawd has brought about for my destruction." For as the poet-lover himself admits, to gain entrance her suitor must enjoy vast wealth (1.5.59–68).

But abandon the precepts of the greedy witch as soon as possible, Delia: for every love is conquered by gifts. The poor man will always be at your service: he will come to you first and stay close to your tender side: the poor man, a faithful companion in the narrow rank of the crowd, will throw his hands down to make a way for you; the poor man will take you stealthily to secret friends and himself unlace the sandals from your snowy feet. Alas! I sing in vain nor is the door conquered by my words to stand open; but must be struck by a full hand.

Delia's interest in wealthy lovers anticipates the more obviously avaricious Nemesis of Tibullus' second collection. There the poet-lover ruefully acknowledges the appeal of exotic luxury goods to the elegiac *domina* (2.3.47–58).

But let Samian ware extend a merry party for you and cups of clay turned on the wheels of Cumae. Alas, there's no denying that girlfriends adore the rich. Then welcome Loot if Love loves affluence. My Nemesis shall float in luxury and strut the Roman streets parading gifts of mine. She shall wear fine silks woven by women of Cos and patterned with paths of gold. She shall have swarthy attendants, scorched in India, stained by the Sun-God steering near. Let Africa with scarlet and Tyre with purple compete to offer her their choicest dyes.

Nemesis bears the name of the Greek goddess of retribution, who frequently pursues and punishes arrogant lovers in Hellenistic epigram (*AP* 5.273, 9.260, 11.326, 12.140–1, 12.193, 12.229). Her name thus constitutes a fitting emblem for the *domina* of Tibullus' second collection, in which the rustic pieties of his first book are often rudely overturned. But the name was also current in the early Principate among Greek slaves and freed-women in Italy (Solin 2003.1.469–70), as indeed were those of the other elegists' mistresses, Lycoris, Cynthia, Delia, and Corinna (Solin 2003, s.v.). Attested epigraphically before and after Augustus, the elegiac mistresses' names bear witness to the circulation of Greek slaves within the empire, not only in the Greek east but also in the Latin-speaking west, where the name Nemesis appears (in Rome) of a dancing girl ([*I*]ulia *Nemesis saltatrix*, *CIL* VI 10143).

The vignette of Nemesis parading like the strumpet she is through the great City (Tib. 2.3.47–58) thus evokes the rich spoils of empire at the same time that it frames Roman wealth and luxury as a reproach to the foreign mistress, whose diaphanous dress of "Coan" silk, rich dyes of scarlet and purple, and exotic Indian attendants, all expensive eastern luxury imports at Rome, advertise their wearer's sexual availability and thereby leave her open to the familiar denunciations of the Roman moralizing tradition (Edwards 1993). In the contrast between the Italian simplicity of the speaker's tastes (2.3.47–8) and the exotic dress of his mistress (2.3.51–4), Tibullus projects the Roman rapacity for exotic luxury items, introduced into Italy as the result of foreign conquest, onto the elegiac *puella*, herself quite probably a foreign luxury import to Rome, and he implicitly represents it as characteristic of her gender and ethnos, denouncing her on both counts.

Corinna Ovidi

Ovid elaborates the settings and themes of Propertian and Tibullan elegy in his *Amores*, a second edition of which survives, perhaps published two decades after Ovid first began to compose poetry c. 25 BCE. In the extant collection, Ovid offers the fullest and most coherent narrative of a love affair in Roman elegy, concealing the identity of his mistress under the pseudonym Corinna – if indeed she existed at all. Already in the *Amores* he jokes of knowing someone who claims to be Corinna (*Am.* 2.17.29), and elsewhere he reports contemporary speculation denying her very existence (*Ars amatoria* 3.538); we may note in addition her absence from Apuleius' notice concerning the girlfriends celebrated in Latin amatory verse (*Apol.* 10, quoted above). Rather the name Corinna advertises her literary provenance, for it alludes to a famous Greek poetess of that name and is a Latinized diminutive of the Greek word for "girl" (*korê*) as well as the metrical equivalent of the Latin synonym, *puella*, regularly used of the elegiac "girl-friend." Ovid describes her physical charms in conventional language (*Am.* 1.5) and characterizes her inconsistently, usually as a courtesan (e.g., through comparison to famous courtesans, *Am.* 1.5.9–12) with a "procuress" (*Am.* 1.8), but occasionally as a married woman (e.g., through references to a "husband," *maritus*, *Am.* 1.9.25; 2.2.51; 2.19.57; 3.4.27; 3.8.63; and to adultery, *Am.* 3.4). Scholarly consensus has therefore seen in Corinna a composite figure of the conventional elegiac mistress rather than a real historical woman.

The first book introduces the elegiac mistress Corinna along with the stock scenes (party, locked out lover's complaint, quarrel) and standard characters (*vir*, door-keeper, bawd, hairdresser, go-between) of an elegiac affair; the second complicates the affair with the introduction of rivals to both Corinna and the speaker, but also with the separation of speaker and mistress while on journeys and in ill health; and the third recounts the waning of the speaker's passion, graphically figured as impotence in 3.7, and his increasing distance from and disillusionment with his promiscuous mistress. Ovid's elegy embodies a carnal physicality alien to that of Tibullus and Propertius, starting with a sexual double-entendre in his description of the rhythm of the elegiac couplet in the very first poem (1.1.17–18) and continuing in poems detailing Corinna's naked charms (1.5); the speaker's susceptibility to a variety of women (2.4), including Corinna's hairdresser (2.8); his stamina in bed (2.10, 2.15); and his unexpected impotence (3.7). Like his predecessors' descriptions of their mistresses/books, however, Ovid's representation of elegiac women's beauty, sartorial preferences, and deportment exemplify the stylistic sophistication of his own elegiac verse, transformed through metaphor into the figure of the mistress (Keith 1994).

The leisurely description of Corinna's figure in *Amores* 1.5 is one of the fullest portraits of a mistress in Latin elegy (*Am.* 1.5.17–22):

As she stood before my eyes with her clothing laid aside, nowhere on her whole body was there a blemish (*menda*). What arms, what shoulders did I see and touch! How fit for caressing was the form (*forma*) of her breasts! How flat her belly beneath the faultless bosom! What a long and beautiful flank! How youthful her thigh!

Ovid here employs the diction of Latin literary criticism to characterize Corinna's body and, implicitly, his own amatory verse, thereby conflating the physique of his

elegiac girlfriend with the poetics espoused in his elegiac collection. Corinna's bodily perfection thus corresponds to the stylistic refinement privileged throughout the *Amores*. The poet-lover even implies that her poetic existence is more concrete than her physical existence, for he not only relishes the confusion about the identity of the real Corinna (*Am.* 2.17.29–30; *Ars* 3.538) but he even promotes it (*Tr.* 2.339–340; 4.10.65–68). Indeed, Ovid playfully draws attention to her status as a literary construction: she is the inspiration for his poetry but also its sole subject (*Am.* 1.3.19–20; 2.17.33–34; 3.12.16; cf. *Tr.* 4.10.59–60), since she postures as an elegiac poet but is also the resulting written text (*Am.* 2.19.9–13; 2.17.10). Ovid thus insists that we recognize and appreciate the specifically literary qualities of the elegiac mistress: Corinna's style derives quite precisely from the literary conventions of elegiac verse.

In this, as in so many other regards, Ovidian amatory elegy takes up the themes associated by his predecessors with the *domina*. Indeed, it is Ovid who articulates most clearly the lover's commitment to *militia amoris* and *seruitium amoris*, in thrall to his mistress (*Am.* 1.9.1–8):

Every lover is a soldier (*militat omnis amans*), and Cupid has his own camp; Atticus, believe me, every lover is a soldier. The age suited to war is also appropriate to Venus. It is shameful for an old man to be a soldier, shameful for an old man to love. The spirit that generals sought in a brave soldier, a pretty girl (*puella*) seeks in a male friend. Both are wakeful; each takes his rest on the ground – the one attends (*seruat*) the door of his mistress (*domina*), the other that of his general.

He also denounces the faithlessness and venality of the elegiac mistress, devoting an entire elegy to excoriating his mistress (presumably Corinna) for her grasping character (*Am.* 1.10.11–14):

Why have I changed, do you ask? Since you demand gifts. This reason makes you unattractive to me. While you were innocent, I loved your mind along with your body; now your beauty has been harmed by your mind's fault.

Her greed leads him to compare her to a courtesan (*Am.* 1.10.21–4):

The courtesan stands for hire by anyone for a fixed price and seeks poor profit from her body's submission to commands. Nonetheless, she curses her greedy pimp's power and does under compulsion what you do of your own accord.

By emphasizing all women's venality (cf. *Am.* 1.10. 29–30, “only woman delights in stripping spoils from man, and alone rents nights, alone comes for hire”), the Ovidian poet-lover collapses all women, including his mistress, into the class of courtesans.

It is therefore not surprising that Corinna in *Amores* 1.10 and 1.14 (like Cynthia in Propertius' elegy 2.16) acts in accordance with the precepts of the elegiac bawd, who is primarily concerned with securing wealth (James 2003). Thus Dipsas in *Amores* 1.8 wishes her charge to be as wealthy as she is beautiful (*Am.* 1.8.27–8) and therefore counsels her to assess potential lovers by their wealth (*Am.* 1.8.37–8), however lowly their

class background (*Am.* 1.8.61–2). Dipsas argues that wealth makes suitors far preferable to poets or even impoverished aristocrats (*Am.* 1.8.61–66):

Whoever will give you a gift, let him be greater than great Homer to you; believe me, it is mark of talent to give. Nor look down on one who has been redeemed with the price of freedom; a chalk-marked foot is an empty reproach. Nor let old wax masks on display in entrance halls deceive you: take your ancestors off, along with yourself, poor lover.

The Ovidian bawd contrasts love and war, Mars and Venus, in her precepts (*Am.* 1.8.29–32), but her contrast occludes the support Mars provides Venus (*Am.* 1.8.41–2): “Now Mars trains men’s courage in foreign wars, and Venus rules in the city of her son Aeneas.” Ovid, like Gallus, Propertius and Tibullus before him, implies that the mistress’ amatory caprice is rewarded with the luxury products that flowed into the city as a result of imperial conquest.

An Ovidian innovation in this context is the introduction to amatory verse of another set of expensive accessories for the elegiac mistress’ toilette, her hair and hairdressers. In *Amores* 1.14, for example, Ovid extends the elegists’ interest in the tangible spoils of Roman military dominion to include the exotic wig of German hair that his mistress wears (*Am.* 1.14.45–6): “Now Germany will send you captured hair; you will be saved by the gift of a nation over whom we have triumphed.” Elsewhere in the collection, Ovid celebrates the skills of his mistress’ Greek hairdressers. Thus in *Amores* 1.11–12, the poet-lover employs Corinna’s hairdresser Nape as a go-between to make an assignation with his mistress, flattering her as learned in not only hair-dressing but also the amatory arts. Nape’s learning reflects the sophistication of both the lover’s mistress and the poet’s verse, and it recalls the elegists’ symbolic association of their mistress’ beauty with their sophisticated poetics. Similarly, in the following book, the poet-lover defends himself against Corinna’s suspicion of an amatory intrigue with her hairdresser Cypassis (*Am.* 2.7), only to reveal the accuracy of her charge in the following poem, addressed to Cypassis, where he recalls the number and variety of their sexual trysts in terms that also implicitly assert the overlap between sexual style and literary style (*Am.* 2.8).

Like her hair and her hairdressers, moreover, the elegiac *domina* must be counted another luxury import to Rome. As Sharon James (2003) has demonstrated, the elegiac *domina* is an avatar of the high-priced Greek courtesan familiar from new comedy, both literally and literarily available to the Roman elites as a result of the expansion of their military empire into Greece. Ovid assures his readers in *Ars* 1 that Rome provides an abundance of foreign women from whom to choose a mistress (*Ars* 1.171–6):

Why, did Caesar not recently introduce Persian and Athenian ships in the guise of a naval engagement? Surely youths and maidens came from either sea, and the whole huge world was in the City. Who did not find something to love in that crowd? Alas, how many men did a foreign love overthrow!

Ovid’s boast is borne out by the inscriptional evidence of the sexual availability of slaves and freedwomen in Italy with the Greek names ascribed by the elegists to their mistresses (Solin 2003, s.v.).

Conclusion

The textualization of the elegiac mistress, and her concomitant circulation among men, is a central gender dynamic of the genre and can be paralleled throughout Augustan literature. Thus Propertius' elegy 1.1 describes the poet-lover's passionate love for her, but the poem itself plays a wider function in the collection since it is addressed to his patron Tullus. Cynthia, both the lover's mistress and the poet's book of elegies, is thereby subsumed into the gift presented to Tullus, who, as the addressee of the first poem, is the dedicatee of the collection (Keith 2008). Cynthia circulates between Propertius and his patrons Tullus and Maecenas (2.1, 3.9), as well as other friends and rivals, just as Delia and Nemesis circulate between Tibullus and his patron Messalla (1.1, 1.3) and his friend Cornutus (2.3), and Corinna and Ovid's other mistresses between Ovid and Atticus (*Am.* 1.9), Graecinus (2.10), Macer and Sabinus (2.18). The elegiac mistress' general circulation brings literary renown to the poet but leaves her vulnerable to the lover's charges of promiscuity (Fear 2000). For elegiac poetry, like other contemporary literary genres, circulated among the Roman political elites within a culture of institutionalized social relations that consolidated male authority in and through women's bodies. By addressing members of the Roman social and political elite as patrons, friends and literary rivals, the elegists appeal to and consolidate the homosocial bonds of elite male friendship and implicitly document the social and political entitlements of their own class and gender.

Despite the autobiographical and homosocial frame of the genre, however, Latin elegy is unusual in endowing its female characters with speech. Propertian elegy is especially noteworthy in this regard, for Cynthia utters nine speeches in direct discourse, occupying all or part of 137 lines. While Delia and Nemesis do not speak in Tibullan elegy, Ovid gives each of them voice in his epicedion for the dead Tibullus (*Am.* 3.9), as he also does Corinna elsewhere in the *Amores*. Even more striking, perhaps, is the inclusion in individual elegies of lengthy speeches by the bawds Acanthis and Dipsas (Prop. 4.5, Ov. *Am.* 1.8), who directly oppose the goals of the elegiac speaker. The openness of elegy to female expressions of desire may explain, in part, both the existence and the survival of the *elegidia* of Sulpicia ([Tib.] 3.9, 11, 13–18), the granddaughter or great-granddaughter of S. Sulpicius Rufus (cos. 51 BCE) and Messalla's sister Valeria (Syme 1981, Parker 1994, Keith 1997). Although Augustan elegy undoubtedly traffics in women, the genre not only explores more personal aspects of women's lives than other contemporary literary genres admit, but also offers a more complex and nuanced portrait of women's personal relations with men.

FURTHER READING

Feminist criticism has spurred interest in gender and sexuality in Latin literature and Roman culture generally, and in the Augustan period in particular. Good points of entry to cultural specifics are: on women and law, especially Augustus' moral legislation, Gardner 1986 and McGinn 1998 and 2004; on Roman marriage, Treggiari 1991; on the Roman rhetoric of immorality, Edwards 1993; and, on sex and gender in ancient Rome, Hallett/Skinner 1997, Wyke 1998, Hemelrijk 1999, Dixon 2001, and Ancona/Greene 2005.

A great deal of work has been done on the representation of women in Augustan elegy. On elegy, see especially Wyke 2002, which collects her ground-breaking studies of the late 1980s and early 1990s: Wyke 1987a, 1987b, 1989a, 1989b, 1992, 1994a, 1994b. See also, on the names of elegiac mistresses, Randall 1979; on Ovidian elegy, Sharrock 1991, 1994, 2002, and Keith 1994, 2009; on Propertian elegy, Gold 1993, McNamee 1993, Greene 1998, James 2003, and Keith 2008; and on Tibullan elegy, Fineberg 1993.

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CHAPTER 19

“Patronage and the Elegists: Social Reality or Literary Construction?”

Barbara K. Gold

1. Introduction

Patronage played a major role in the workings of the Roman republic and empire. It was an important way of generating power that intersected with and complemented other parallel social systems. The social practice of exchanging goods and services between either two peers or the wealthy and their dependents was called by the Romans *amicitia*, “friendship,” an elastic term that spans many semantic registers (to be discussed below). Some believe that literary patronage was no different, or not measurably different, from the various and many kinds of relationships defined by the term *amicitia* (White 1993). Others would argue that literary patronage was unique and operated with its own rules, apart from the broader practice that was so pervasive in Roman society (Saller 1982; Zetzel 1982; Gold 1987; Bowditch 2001).

Although most scholars believe that patronage is central to ancient culture and ideology, there is disagreement about whether to treat the texts in which patronage figures as socio-historical documents or as literary artifacts. Should we consider the poetic texts of the Augustan period as evidence for the historical names and actions behind the institution of patronage, or are they rather pieces of literature in their own right, no more (or less) determined by the historical context in which they are embedded than any other poetic text and not to be mined for historical fact? If we regard these texts as purely literary artifacts, should a seemingly external institution such as patronage matter at all? If we admit, however, that patronage did have an influence on poetry, we need to acknowledge the distinction between an external (historical) versus an internal (poetic) stimulus. Did a patron exist as an historical figure who had a direct influence on what a poet wrote (Syme 1939), to whom he wrote, or how he wrote? Or was a patron rather raw material for verse, standing as a symbol for important themes and ideas in the poet’s work, an

element “in a constant poetic reprocessing” of the poet’s life (White 2007, 195), a figure who becomes transmuted, like the poet’s mistress, into subject matter for the verse, a “unifying and thematic element” for the poetry book (Gold 1987, 147; see here in general, Gold 1987, 142–72; White 2007)?

Another difficulty in confronting the phenomenon of patronage is the need to distinguish (as with any social institution) between ideology and behavior. We need to be cognizant that often behavior does not reflect ideology and that we cannot necessarily judge anything about the actual workings of patronage from what a poet claims to be true on an idealizing or symbolic level (see Konstan 1995, especially 340–1).

The language of patronage provides another stumbling block for the reader. Far from being a transparent window into the world of the poet and patron, the language rather obscures the relationships, purposely so. The broad term *amicitia* could have a wide range of meaning, and the word *amicus* is a nicely ambiguous word that could apply equally well to client or patron, to political ally or personal intimate (Gold 1987, 134; Konstan 1995, especially 328–9).

Finally there is one more major obscuring issue: the anachronism of applying our modern (or pre-modern) term “patronage” to Roman literary relationships. As Saller points out, “the ‘technical’ criteria suggested for Roman patronage are modern attributions” (Saller 1989, 54) and carry connotations that mislead us badly when we are attempting to grasp the nature of Roman patronage. White asserts that many of the behaviors we assign to powerful patrons in Rome, especially Augustus, and to the phenomena resulting from them (e.g., court poetry) can actually be traced to political institutions in 17th-century France and 18th-century Britain, and that this skews our perception of how patronage operated in Rome (White 1993, Chapters 4 and 5, 95–155). What later became a political institution was hardly such in Rome: no one was ordering the Roman poets to praise the Augustan regime, and no good poet was producing poems on demand. And the evidence for the important role of patronage in Roman society is not as unambiguous, as strong, or as widespread as we would wish. As Brunt says, “modern accounts of patronage ... conceal how elusive is the evidence for its strength. The references to it are somewhat rare; and it is not conspicuous where we should most expect to find it” (Brunt 1988, 441).

These then are some of the general concerns around the topic of patronage that will concern us in this essay. In the first two sections, I will take up in greater detail many of these general issues surrounding the institution of patronage, as detailed above: patronage as a socio-political or a literary institution; the historicity of “patrons” and “clients”; the definition of “literary patronage”; the terminology used of relationships of patronage (*amicitia*, *amicus*, *patronus* and *cliens*); *beneficia*, “gifts” or “goods,” and *officia*, “duties”; and the role of the emperor in the social, political, and cultural milieu of patronage relationships. In the final section of the essay, I will focus on two particular Roman elegiac poets, Tibullus and Propertius, and the great men to whom they dedicate poems or make reference (Messalla, Maecenas and Tullus). I will examine these relationships as they are embedded in two distinctly Roman cultural settings: the triangulated amatory group of poet-mistress-patron, where the patron often plays an amatory character; and the theme of the triumph of empire in Roman elegiac poetry, where the patron often takes a starring role.

2. Terminology, Definitions, Semantics, and Socio-Cultural Considerations

Patronage as a socio-political or a literary institution

Patronage begs to be studied as a political or social institution that involves highly placed historical figures (emperors, senators, wealthy men, generals) in relationships with either peers or lesser figures in which benefits are given by both sides to cement an on-going, mutually beneficial bond that is both personal and socio-political in nature. When we read a poem written to a patron, we want to know who each person is, what they stood to gain, and what resulted from the relationship.

But, if a poem involves a patron/dedicatee, we must then think about the poetic aspects of the situation and the *dramatis personae*. Is Propertius describing an historical figure when he addresses Maecenas at some length in poems 2.1 and 3.9, explaining why he is unable to write the kind of verse Maecenas is purportedly requesting (epic), or is Maecenas transmuted into a symbol of important ideas in Propertius' poetry, or into a set of values that Propertius is rejecting (see Gold 1982b, 103–17; Gold 1987, 142–72, especially 171–2)?

If we are focused on political patronage, the historical details are more important. The classic work on this is Syme's *Roman Revolution* (1939); his approach has been modulated in scholarship since then, under the influence of both socio-anthropology and of literary criticism. For example, Wallace-Hadrill argues against the "who knew whom" brand of political history (1989b, 69), saying that patronage "must be seen as one of several methods of generating power," a system which served the primary function of providing "a connection between the centre of power and the peripheries which the centre sought to control" (1989b, 71, 85).

If, however, we are focused only on how patronage worked and is displayed in Roman poetry, we are less inclined to look at "who knew whom" and are drawn more in the direction of the figurative and ideological uses of patronage: how the figure of the patron is portrayed in relation to the figures of the poet and his mistress, and how the patron is used to further the poet's agenda. The patron in this case is less an historical figure than a poetic fiction. Nonetheless, we cannot take this too far; as Citroni says, "the space of private relations in Horace ... cannot be systematically reduced to a mere fictitious pretext for introducing content of more general validity; it has its own reality and value" (Citroni 1995, 279; cited and translated by White 2007, 203–4). Citroni seeks a balance between the historical and the poetic, and he accomplishes this by addressing two levels of audience: real contemporaries, who will find meaningful the real situations addressed; and the general reader to whom Horace's narrator communicates on "broad issues of politics, poetry and ethics" (White 2007, 204).

Citroni is onto something: we need not reject all the political and historical aspects of patronage (see Miller 1994) or ignore all its literary aspects (Syme 1939). If literary texts are sites for "the contesting and negotiation of societal dynamics" (Tatum 1997, 482–3), then we may think of the Roman elegiac poet as infusing his literary pieces with socio-political concerns (as, for example, Catullus and Propertius did). While Roman elegy may have been a strikingly inward-looking genre, in which the poet focused largely on

himself and his private relationships, there are enough references to contemporary political figures, laws being passed (to the poet's disgust), and military enterprises that we must think of this poetry as a fusion of these two dimensions.

A corollary to the on-going debate about whether patronage should be regarded as a political or a literary institution is whether to place the patron in a particular historical context. While critics often regard the figure of the poet/narrator as a literary construct, they are less willing to depart so far from historical reality where the patron is concerned. But the patron, as seen in Roman poetry, is no more a historical figure than the poet is (see Gold 1982a, 1982b; Santirocco 1982; Oliensis 1997; White 2007, 201ff.; Bowditch essay, this volume). Zetzel, in his article tellingly titled "The Poetics of Patronage in the Late First Century B.C.," claims that there is good reason to regard the direct addresses to patrons as poetic, not political, intended for the ears of the reader and not the purported addressee (89). So "literary values, not social ones, were paramount" (Zetzel 1982, 101), and the patron was chosen for his connotation not his denotation.

Definitions of patronage

We must come to some agreement about what the term "patronage" means, at least at its most basic level. Most recent scholars now start with Saller's definition from his 1982 book *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire*, where he, building on work by J. Boissevain on "Patronage in Sicily," extracts the following three characteristics: 1. A reciprocal exchange of goods and services; 2. A personal relationship of some duration (and so not a commercial transaction); 3. An asymmetrical relationship between two parties of unequal status and offering different kinds of goods and services (and so not a friendship between equals; Saller 1982, 1). Konstan adds a fourth qualification: that the nature of the relationship was conducted with the rules set largely by the party holding superior status and thus the relationship was at least potentially exploitative (Konstan 1995, 328, citing P. Millett 1989, 16, who adds this qualification).

This definition, based more on a sociological than a literary model is so broad that it could equally well apply to other social relationships such as marriage (White 2007, 197), and it does not allow for the many patronage relationships that existed between those holding a similar rank or status (e.g., junior or senior senators).

Confusingly, patronage could apply to relationships that were very different in nature: clearly unequal partners (great men and their humble, lower-class clients, who paid court at their houses in the morning to obtain a small gift of cash or food); literary men like Horace, Propertius or Tibullus, most of whom held the high social rank of *equus* (knight) or even senator (see White 1978, 88; White 1993, Chapter 1, especially the tables on p. 9 and in Appendix I, 211–22), and the political and military figures whom they address in their works; or even two senators at different stages of their careers, with the junior member sometimes well advanced in his career (see Saller 1989, especially 57; Stroup 2010, 8, 18).

Was *literary* patronage somehow different in its nature and structure than other forms of social patronage? Peter White pronounced quite firmly on this question in his 1978 article, "*Amicitia* and the Profession of Poetry in Early Imperial Rome": "There did not exist a Roman code of literary patronage" (84). We might think to ourselves "Well, of

course there was a special kind of relationship that poets had with great men of Rome, one that was distinguished by what kinds of benefits each received, by the fact that these poets were not lower-class Romans to be looked down on by those superior to them.” And this may be true. But so might White’s statement. To reconcile the two points of view, we need to see Roman patronage or *amicitia* as a vast social network that bound one person to another (or to many others) in a variety of ways; everyone in Rome was somehow involved in this network. As White says in the preface to his book on patronage, “Roman poetry seems socially bound to an unusual degree, as anyone knows who has tried to teach it to non-classicists” (White 1993, ix).

Amicitia was an elaborate network or code that enveloped everyone in one way or another. Writers exemplify just one way in which *amicitia* operated, based on their own kinds of gifts exchanged with their patrons. White is apprehensive about using the term *literary* patronage because it may suggest to us (from our current vantage point) a deliberate policy of an ask-and-give exchange: the patron asked for a particular idea or person to be celebrated, the poet responded, the poet was duly rewarded. But there is little evidence, especially in extant poetry (which is almost all by upper-class writers) that there was such a deliberate policy of control over what a poet wrote or how he wrote it.

We can tentatively say that the poet-patron relationship was one among many social relationships that each man entered into. Further we can say that, although many poets shared certain duties with other kinds of clients (e.g., attending dinners and recitations), others were unique in what they gave (the gift of good poetry) and received (the chance to make their work known; encouragement to pursue their art; an entrée into the world of the best poets and patrons of the day). But even for such men, there were duties to perform and social stumbling blocks to surmount, obstacles for which they had to devise coping mechanisms in their behavior, their language and their writing so as to maintain their independence (see Santirocco 1982).

Further, although one member of a patronage relationship was usually lesser than the other (in some way: social rank, status, money, power), there were relationships between two men who were nearly equals in all those ways (Stroup 2010, who uses “patronal-class” to refer to the poets of high rank and social status like Catullus and those to whom they dedicated their poetry; see especially pp. 61, 66ff.). And because most poets already were of independent financial status, few acted at the behest of a patron to produce anything they did not wish to produce, and few produced any directly commissioned works.

The language of patronage

A recent *New York Times* article about the Syrian ruling elite begins as follows: “To many, Maher al-Assad’s power has underscored the narrow circle his brother presides over – *a circle that relies on connections of clan, family and friendship*, and that has proved far less tested by crisis than the ruling elite their father cultivated over three decades” (NYT 6/8/11, p. A1, “Assad Brother Plays Big Role in Ruling Syria”; my emphasis). When this article makes reference to the “friendship” of the close ruling circle, does it mean to imply that these men are tied to each other by bonds of affection, emotion and family? Or, is it used to indicate another kind of social tie that is based on utility, on

reciprocal exchange of favors, on occupying a particular place in a social hierarchy that could change as the political or social winds shift?

Similarly in ancient Rome, the language of patronage is both problematic and essential to our understanding of the institution. We have thus far examined the behavior of Roman patron-client pairs but have not discussed how the language used of and by those involved in patronage relations (and nearly everyone was to some degree) affected the ideology of patronage. The terms *patronus* and *cliens* were rarely used of or by a patron and client: they were avoided in social discourse to avoid the embarrassing and impolite nod to the dependency that often existed in some relationships (cf. Gruen 1990, 79: “*Amicus* had a better ring to it”; see Cicero’s famous statement that rich men thought that to be called a client was tantamount to death, Cic. *Off.* 2.69). The word that was actually used most often of patronage was *amicitia*, and both members of the relationship could be referred to as *amici*, “friends” (see Powell 1995, 32–3). But does this actually mean that they were “friends” in our contemporary affective use of the word (and therefore equals), or is this word used as code to mitigate the actual social distance between the two? It was, of course, possible to qualify the term *amicus* to make it clear who was the superior and who the inferior: so the patron could be called the *amicus potens* (“powerful”) or *dives* (“wealthy”), and the client the *amicus minor* (“lesser”), *pauper* (“poor”), or *humilis* (“humble”; see here White 1978, 80ff.). But in situations of the poets of higher social status whom we have discussed, such terms would normally not have been used. And it was hardly felt necessary to press the point home as in practice everyone knew who was the patron and who the client.

Amicitia was an emotional term used often by the Roman philosophers in a way similar to our word “friendship” to denote a relationship of equals based on honesty, candor, and mutual affection (Cicero *Amic.*, *Off.*; Seneca *Ben.*). When it was appropriated as a term of social discourse to refer to patronage, this word was used to “neutralize the status differences” between the two parties (White 1993, 14). But once this happens, does *amicus* lose its emotive meaning and denote simply a “client”? When Horace says that he was enrolled by Maecenas *in numero amicorum* (“in the group of his friends,” *Sat.* 1.6.62), some critics maintain that *amicorum* here means clients and that there is no distinction between *amicus*, “friend,” and *amicus*, “client” (N. Horsfall, lecture, “Poets and Patron: Maecenas, Horace and the *Georgics*, Once More,” North Ryde, 1981, 5 as cited by Konstan 1995, 328, n. 1). David Konstan disagrees. He argues that *amicitia* always retains its meaning of a personal relationship, and that it is only in this context that the misuse of *amicus* to describe a relationship not based on equal trust and affection works (Konstan 1995, 328ff.; cf. also Powell 1995, 44: “*Amicitia*, then, is personal friendship.”).

So, by this formulation, when the word *amicus* is used, the basic referent for it is “friend” (in the affective sense); when it is used in tension with the social and political relationship of clientage, there is a deep contrast between the two meanings that highlights and exposes the often difficult and humiliating role of a client in an unequal relationship. In many cases it is hard to place a patron or client in the Roman social hierarchy, or to figure out whether, when a poet says he is a friend to one of the Roman great, he means “friend” or “dependent” (and often the term “protégé” is used here to denote someone who holds less power or prestige in the relationship but is not a lowly dependent). But in every case, the use of *amicus* takes its resonance from its original

meaning and refers to the open, candid and honorable relationship between equals that every client hoped to have (or claimed to have). So we might think here of Catullus 1 and Catullus' relationship to Nepos. Catullus provides perhaps our clearest witness to the conflicting potentialities inherent in the various kinds of *amicitia* (see Tatum 1997); so too the satirists like Juvenal, who reveals in his direct broadsides against the patronage system (Sat. 7) and in portraits of extremely unsuccessful *amicitia* relations (Sat. 5) both the ideal situation (which does not exist) and how far most relationships depart from the ideal. It is the manipulation of these many different manifestations of *amicitia* that will concern us in Part 3 below.

Beneficia and officia: gift exchanges

The institution of patronage operated through a series of gift exchanges, or favors and services done by and for each member of the relationship. Many terms were used for such gifts; the most common were *beneficia*, "favors" or "benefactions"; *officia*, "services"; and *munera*, which could designate a gift, public games, political office, or text (Stroup 2010; see also Bowditch 2001 on these terms). We should not imagine a formal or exclusive arrangement between the two members but rather a series of different relationships (with shifting social positions held by the two parties) that might operate as a dyad or in a group around a man of great lineage or political importance like Messalla or Maecenas. The gifts exchanged depended partly upon the talents or position of each member. For those in an on-going relationship (such as Horace and Maecenas), the gift-giving became part of a continuing cycle of benefactions in which reciprocity was a key element.

What sort of gifts were given? There was a wide range (and the imperial poet Martial is our best source for this). The protégé (depending upon his social level) might receive small gifts of food, money, dinners, loans, land or a farm (as in Horace's case), encouragement for his writing, help with publicizing or promulgating his work (often in the form of a gathered audience for a recitation); in the case of the elegiac poets we will focus on in Section 3, most gifts from their great friend would be in the form of assistance with an audience for their writing. In return, a protégé, if a person of an upper social rank, would be less inclined to pay obeisance to a patron with attendance, visits, and other such taxing and unpleasant duties than to give the one major *beneficium* suited to his station and talents: a poem. As White maintains (and this is an important point), since most of our poets already held the status at least of *equites* (knights), whatever tangible gifts they received were not their main or even an important source of income, could not be counted on to supply a steady income, were not considered a *quid pro quo* for a commissioned work, and would be sporadic and casual, not steady and predictable (White 1978, 86ff.). If these poets received a tangible gift, it was not meant to support them but rather to enhance their financial situation and to encourage their writing. While White also emphasizes that the role of playing an *amicus* constituted a career (1982, 56), and a time-consuming one at that, and that even a well-positioned poet fulfilled some of the same duties and functions that other kinds of protégés did (1982, 59), it remains true that these writing men were distinguished by and partly chosen for their main talent: writing and writing well. Many of the great men themselves were writers and were

interested in literature (for example Maecenas, who was not apparently a very good writer but a writer and a man of literature nonetheless; Stroup 2010, 18).

In the case of the Roman elegiac poets, patronal relations are between two people of roughly equal status, and the dedicated or presented text given by the poet to his patron acts as a socio-economic symbol (Bowditch 2001; Stroup 2010). It was through these *munera* and their rhetorical figures that poets and their friends “negotiated both their own interests and those of their varied audiences” (Bowditch 2001, 3). The language used in the poem or *munus* is a gift to the patron or *amicus*, but it is also a means of creating an autonomous situation for/by the poet and an act of resistance by the poet (often called a *recusatio*: a polite and subtle “refusal” to carry out the request that has been made). The *munus*, or gift, becomes in the poets of Republican Rome a textual object that forms the basis of a gift exchange (Stroup 2010, 66–100; see Bowditch 2001, 42 for a distinction between gift economy and gift exchange).

There were then many rules to follow, rules embedded in the social practices of patronal relations and of gift exchange. These rules are, of course, never stated by either party – everyone knew what they were and did not need or want to articulate them – and they varied according to the specific parties to and terms of the relationship.

The role of the emperor

With the advent of the emperor Augustus, the role of the patron changed; he became the patron of first resort. While much of Roman elegiac poetry was written before his presence became pervasive and overshadowed the other great men of Rome, the shift to imperial patronage deserves a brief mention. The idea of the patronal role as a mark of aristocratic privilege and munificence was firmly embedded in Roman culture by the time of the principate, so Augustus, in his new role as the only important patron, followed naturally upon the roles taken by his aristocratic peers. White asks why the late Republican poets acquiesced in celebrating Augustan themes in their verse, and he posits several reasons: their self-aware standing as Roman citizens and their defense of the ideals that they upheld in that role; their embeddedness in the pervasive Augustan culture; their desire for legitimacy and support; and their vision of Augustan themes as desirable material for their poetry (White 1993, 95–208). Attention to a change in the language used of patronage during this period also shows us a shift in focus: so *munus* comes to be used absolutely as the gift of a sole being or deity and not in a reciprocal sense (see Stroup 2010, 97ff. for *munus*; Miller 2004, 157–9 for the restructuring of patronage relations at the rise of the principate).

3. Patronage in the Roman Elegists: Tibullus and Propertius

As indicated in sections 1 and 2, patronage is a complicated affair, and this is no less true in the lives of the poets. The system of literary patronage operated within and alongside of the complex nexus of Roman social relationships. In this section, we will

look at two ways in which patrons functioned: as amatory figures and stand-ins for the poets' lovers, and as players in the military and political life of the late Republic and early Empire, especially as triumphal figures. We will look closely at a few poems that feature these poets and their patrons: Tibullus and his Messalla, Propertius and his Maecenas and his Tullus. There are many others we could examine (Catullus and his various literary friends ["patrons"?] such as Nepos; Sulpicia and Messalla; Ovid and Paullus Fabius Maximus [*Pont.* 1.2]). In each case, the relationship was different, and most often the word patron cannot really be used (hence the quotation marks above). It should be reiterated that most if not all the elegiac poets were themselves of substantial financial and social standing (at least *equites*, knights; see White 1993, 213–22. White leaves the status of Catullus and Propertius unclear, but see White 1978, 88, and n. 42, where he cites Lily Ross Taylor, who has Propertius and possibly Catullus in her list of *equites*. The poet Sulpicia, the only female poet in the group, belonged to the senatorial class). Thus these poets cannot be called "clients," and they did not need financial support. So we must treat the word patron, when we use it, with great caution.

The patron as amatory figure

When Seneca, in his *De Beneficiis* (4.40.4) tries to define when and how a person in a reciprocal relationship should return a *munusculum*, or small gift (neither too quickly nor too slowly), he describes a relationship in which the recipient is placed in a very vulnerable position, in an "erotically tinged vacillation between servitude and power" (Stroup 2010, 99). These opposed positions of power could be filled equally well by a poet and patron, or by a poet and his mistress. In each relationship, the poet is beholden to another, must negotiate difficult situations and crises, creates literary immortality for his addressee (or claims to), takes on both active and passive roles, and becomes subordinate to the other member. Often there is triangulation, with poet, patron and mistress occupying the three roles in the relationship, where mistress and patron exchange roles of dominance and subservience with each other and with the poet (for the eroticization of the patron, see Oliensis 1997; Wyke 2002, 172–3).

In Tibullus 1.1.53–4, the poet praises his patron Messalla and his campaigns abroad on land and sea. M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus was an estimable man. The most noble of Romans, a scion of the house of the Valerii, he was "*Romanitas* incarnate" (Johnson 1990, 95). Johnson gives a thumbnail sketch of this admirable Roman soldier, orator and politician that captures well his standing in Roman society and with Tibullus: "this tough and resilient aristocrat, one of the very few to survive both civil wars with both his skin and his honor intact ... he was, in Tibullus' lifetime, the current Valerian representative of the breed that had won the empire, subdued the world, and (as the Romans liked to think of it) civilized it" (Johnson 1990, 95–6).

But Tibullus says that his own place is before the doors of his lovely mistress, without care for any glory or praise, and he is happy to be called an idler. This is his *militia amoris* (his service for the cause of love, not war). Tibullus is pulled in two directions at once, to the military campaigns of Messalla and to his mistress Delia. He ends poem 1.1 by declaring "here [in love's battles and brawls] I am a brave leader and soldier" (*hic ego dux*

milesque bonus, 1.1.75), a strong statement rejecting the pursuit of war (this position becomes standard fare for the elegists). In Tibullus 1.3, Tibullus is languishing on the island of Corcyra. Delia is not physically present (nor any female family member) to help Tibullus recover from his illness; indeed Delia, having consulted the divine signs, has sent the reluctant Tibullus off to accompany Messalla on his campaign. Tibullus asks Messalla to be “mindful” of him (*memores ... mei*, 1.3.2), something he might well have asked of Delia before his departure.

In Tibullus 1.5, patron and mistress gather in a pastoral dream scene at the poet’s country house. Tibullus brings them together in his discourse, claiming each for his own (*mea Delia*, 21; *Messalla meus*, 31) in parallel language. Delia will – in Tibullus’ dream – wait on both men; thus the subordination in the role of poet and patron (real) and of poet and mistress (feigned) comes full circle to mistress and patron, completing the triangle. Just as Tibullus sees himself as Delia’s slave at the outset of the poem and as her client near the end (61–6), so Delia becomes Messalla’s dutiful servant (*ministra*, 34) when Messalla comes to visit, moving Messalla into the superior roles of both patron and lover.

While both patron and mistress are textualized by Tibullus and given certain roles to play in his poetry, Messalla has the more solid identity, possessing a strong and verifiable historical presence and a reality factor not possessed by Delia, whose fluid identity changes in response to Tibullus’ and Messalla’s situations (for Tibullus, Messalla and Delia, see Bowditch, Keith, Liveley, Miller, O’Rourke, and Wray in this volume). Indeed, in Tibullus 1.7, a poem solely in praise of Messalla in which Delia has no role, Messalla is given a triple gift of praise for his military feats and victories, celebration of his birthday, and a hymn in his honor. He is celebrated for his triumph in 27 BCE, and his civic work at Rome repairing a road, the Via Latina (see Knox 2005 on the dating of Tibullus 1.7 and Tibullus in general; Bowditch 2011). Again in poem 2.1, Messalla is present (in name at least) at a country festival where Tibullus asks him to come and breathe inspiration on him while he hymns the gods of the fields (Tib. 2.1.33–6). Thus here Messalla takes on an additional role as the poet’s muse and inspiration, a role more often played in elegiac poetry by the mistress.

Although there is, then, clearly a homology between Messalla and Delia, or patron and mistress, this purported likeness is, as Oliensis says, a “cultivated illusion” (Oliensis 1997, 152). The two figures are in many ways not symmetrical, one being highly placed and honorable, the other often disreputable. In addition, when the poet claims to be a dependent of his mistress, the claim is a subterfuge since he has the true power in their relationship (Oliensis 1997, 157; Gold 1993). But in a male-to-male relationship, particularly when the male is as powerful as Messalla, the dependency is no illusion or deception. Despite the fixed nature of the patron’s actual historical position, he can fulfill various powerful roles including that of father (see Miller 2004, 124–29; Janan in this volume).

But the patron, as Oliensis says, “can never be as pure a variable in the poetic equation as the *puella*” (1997, 153).

Propertius differs from Tibullus in several respects. He picks up on, and in fact embroiders on, the erotic implications of *amicitia*, but positions himself in relationship with two different patrons, Maecenas and Tullus. His patronal/erotic language is far more pervasive and foregrounded, especially in the poems to Tullus. And his social status in

respect to his patrons, in particular Maecenas, is unlike that between Tibullus and Messalla. Maecenas, who is addressed in only two poems, 2.1 and 3.9, was not a senator but a knight, a rank that he retained by his own choosing (although Propertius does refer to his royal Etruscan lineage in 3.9.1: “Maecenas, eques Etrusco de sanguine regum,” “Maecenas, knight from the blood of Etruscan kings”). He was a man of enormous influence under Augustus but never held public office. In some ways, then, he was a nice parallel to Propertius himself (in Propertius’ distorted view), someone who was of equal rank (*eques*) and who modestly refused to take on projects outside of his competency or station (Prop. 3.9.2; cf. Zetzel 1982, 97ff.). Propertius’ other patron, Tullus, the addressee of five poems, was the descendent of a senatorial family. His uncle, L. Volcaciuss Tullus, was consul with Octavian in 33 BCE and proconsul of Asia in 30–29 BCE; the Volcaci family was from Perusia, Propertius’ home territory. Again, there are parallels between them, but Tullus, being a junior member of this family, would not have carried the same standing as his uncle (Oliensis 1997, 157 and n. 22).

Propertius’ two substantial poems to Maecenas come not in Book 1 (where most of his poems to Tullus are) but at the start of Book 2 (2.1) and in the middle of Book 3 (3.9). Maecenas is not a substitute for Propertius’ mistress Cynthia as much as an excuse for Propertius to make clear that it is Cynthia – her walk, her looks, her dress, her hair, her music – who inspires his *amores* (love poems and erotic feelings), and thus *his* Iliads will be about love, not war or political events as Maecenas has apparently suggested (at least according to Propertius, 2.1.25–6; 3.9.1–4). In this major poem to a major patron, it is the *puella*, mistress, who has the first and last word (2.1.4, 78). Maecenas may be Propertius’ glory (2.1.74), but he cannot outdo Cynthia in being Propertius’ muse. In poem 3.9, Propertius seems to put his poetic talents into Maecenas’ patronal hands: “take up the soft (erotic, *mollia*) reins of my youthful poetry, begun with you as my patron (*fautor*), and give favorable signs to my speeding wheels” (3.9.57–8). Propertius, then, uses eroticized language here of his relationship to Maecenas, and Cynthia has disappeared from the picture by 3.9, giving way to Maecenas as the substitute muse (see Keith 2008, 115ff, 132ff.). The figure of Cynthia becomes increasingly melded together with his poetry, a text that will then be given as a gift to his patrons. Thus the patron here functions doubly, in both a poetic setting, as a theme for Propertius’ poetry and his Muse, and as the historical figure to whom this poetic gift might be presented.

Propertius’ poems to his first patron, Tullus, are more overtly eroticized. Tullus is addressed immediately in the first poem of Book 1 (1.1.9) as the dedicatee of the poem and the book, but also as a member of the group of friends summoned to help him at the end of the poem (1.1.25–30) and one of a group of poets addressed in later poems in Book 1 (Bassus, 1.4; Gallus, 1.5, 10, 13, 20; Ponticus, 1.7, 9). Thus Tullus is cast from the beginning as an important member of a homosocial network of friends and dedicatees (see Keith 2008, 126–7). Although the topic of poem 1.1 is Cynthia (the first word) and the way in which Propertius has been enslaved by love (1.1.1), the heterosexual overtones here take second place to the homosocial relations between men in the poem and in later poems. Tullus is addressed at regular intervals throughout Book 1, in 1.6, 1.14, and 1.22; thus he occupies a place of honor as the addressee of the first and last poems (he later appears again as the addressee of 3.22). To a large degree, these poems to Tullus are an explanation of and defense of Propertius’ life of love and love poetry, and a refusal (a *recusatio*) to take up the life of travel abroad in imperial service

and the writing of the kind of poetry that praises such a life (see Johnson 2009, 98 on the nature of Tullus' venture abroad). Tullus turns out to be a very important figure for Propertius, one who embodies the exact opposite of the life that Propertius has both been given and has chosen to lead, and one against whom he can define himself and his poetry. So Johnson calls Tullus Propertius' "first and most crucial foil-figure" (2009, 110).

Propertius' patronal dalliance with his friend and dedicatee is made clear in a fascinating way in poems 1.6 and 3.22. In 1.6 (and later 1.14) Propertius uses the figure of Tullus as a foil for himself and his own life's values: Tullus is a man of duty, of action, of Roman life, while Propertius is a man devoted to love, to his mistress Cynthia, and to a life of leisure and decadence: "Non ego sum laudi, non natus idoneus armis:/hanc me militiam fata subire volunt," 1.6.29–30 ("I was not born for glory, not born suitable for fighting; it's in *this* kind of military warfare [=love] that the fates want me to serve"). But after he sets up this opposition, the rhetorical description of Tullus' new life in the east undermines the differences between them: Tullus is headed to *mollis Ionia* (soft/decadent Ionia) or *Lydia arata* (the fields of Lydia, 1.6.31–2). So Tullus has his own "women" there, and he will now be defined by the one key word that marks Propertius' poetic life: *mollis* (and strangely, in this topsy-turvy world, Propertius will meanwhile be at home with his Cynthia living under a "hard/unlucky star," *duro sidere*, 1.6.36, where the word *durus*, opposite to *mollis*, is used uncharacteristically of the soft elegiac life; see Oliensis 1997, 170, n. 24 for *mollis* and *durus*). Along with this redefining of and sharing of qualities with Tullus, Propertius says poignantly to him: "if there ever comes to you an hour when you are not unmindful of me" ("tum tibi si qua mei veniet non immemor hora," 1.6.35; we might think here of Tibullus' request to Messalla to be mindful of him [*memores mei*, Tib. 1.3.2]). Propertius has thus turned this goodbye poem (*propempticon*) into a reproach to Tullus for leaving him (although it is Propertius who refuses to go), abandoning Rome and the *durus* life for the ladies (Ionia, Lydia) and the decadence of the east, a place where Tullus might not give him a thought.

In poem 3.22, which has occasioned much surprise at its seeming reversals of position and attitude (Johnson 2009, 110–17), Propertius returns to Tullus once more. Tullus, it seems, is still in the east (we do not know why), and Propertius appeals to him to return to Rome (which receives high praise), delivering lines startling for their direct emotional diction: "if you are not touched by my longing for you" (*si ... nec desiderio, Tulle, movere meo*, 3.22.5–6). This poem is also full of "ladies," who are keeping Tullus away from Rome: the statue of Dindymian Cybele, the cities of Helle (3.22.1–5). Thus again Propertius swaps identifying characteristics with Tullus (as in poem 1.6), claiming (rhetorically at least) the Roman position as his own and casting Tullus in erotic and elegiac language, even making Tullus the object of his affection in 3.22.5–6. Whether or not we see Propertius' claim of longing for Tullus as sincere, as elegiacizing rhetoric, or as a deliberately overstated part of this odd poem that undercuts itself by its own absurdities (see Johnson 2009, 110–17), the erotic language and figures used here and in 1.6 show Propertius going one better on Tibullus' eroticizing of *amicitia*. Propertius takes the figure of the patron and uses him as a literary and social conceit: the erotic undertones help to define who Propertius is and what he writes (by using his "patrons" as foils), and also to foreground male homosocial bonds, using himself, his patron, and his mistress in triangulated situations (see Keith 2008, 115ff., "Between Men," on the articulation of homosocial bonds among men in Propertius).

The patron as triumphal figure

The triumph motif in Roman elegy is used as both a metaphor, with the poet himself acting as *triumphator* (Prop. 2.14.23–4, 3.1.9–12, 19–20), and as a reference to the actual ritual of the celebratory triumph (Tib. 1.7, 2.1.33–4, 2.5.113–20; Prop. 2.1.31–6; Ovid *Ars* 1.213–18), sometimes with the poet as witness (Prop. 3.4.11–18; Ovid *Ars* 1.219–28). As Leach says (essay in this volume), elegiac triumphs are “a quintessential example of reality reconfigured by representation” and are for the elegiac poets one of the most specifically referential features of their Roman topographies (Leach refers here to M. Beard’s *The Roman Triumph* [Cambridge, MA 2007]).

The triumph motif evokes (in contrast to the poems that eroticize the patron) a wholly masculine, military and Roman world in which poet and patron forge a bond through the manipulation of the trappings of triumph and empire. The realistic representation here – this is a scene which every Roman reader would be able to envision and conjure – brings the two men together in a vibrant and visual way, one as *triumphator* and one as the *laudator* (“praiser”) of the triumphing general. So in 1.7, Tibullus celebrates Messalla’s triumph in 27 BCE. After a description of the standard ingredients in any Roman triumph (the spectators, Roman youth; the captive leaders of nations; the conquering general; the ivory chariot drawn by white horses), Tibullus indicates his own role in this triumph (“not without me was this honor of yours won,” 9), claiming both a share in Messalla’s victory (he perhaps served with Messalla in Aquitania) and a close alliance with him at this present moment. Messalla is compared in this poem to the Egyptian god Osiris, a deity of ambiguous gender whose feminized aspect stands in opposition to the tough and war-faring Messalla (see Bowditch 2011 for an in-depth discussion of Tib. 1.7 and the roles of Osiris and Messalla). But later in the poem, when Tibullus moves from Messalla’s triumph to his birthday celebration, Messalla is pictured at his banquet with ointment in his hair and *mollia* (soft) garlands on his neck (1.7.51–2; cf. Prop. 3.1.19). The elegiac marker *mollia*, along with the bisexual figure of Osiris, act again (as in the eroticized patron passages) to bring out a softer side of Messalla and another aspect of his relationship to Tibullus. Nonetheless, patron and poet are bound together here by the most Roman of rituals, in which a masculine and militaristic hegemony is celebrated.

The theme of the patron as *triumphator* plays an equally important role in the other elegiac poets in many ways. Propertius, in undertaking to celebrate Augustus’ triple triumph in 29 BCE and Maecenas’ role in this celebration (2.1.35–6), even while he refuses to write such imperialistic verse, implicitly aligns himself with his patron and with masculine dominance in the public and private domains (see Bowditch essay in this volume).

We have looked at just two ways in which a patron, or literary friend, functions in Roman elegy: as an amatory figure who either substitutes for the mistress or is in a triangulated relationship with poet and mistress, and as a figure of triumphal imperialism, who acts as a foil for the poet, his values and his lifestyle. The patron represents a *Romanitas* that the poet claims he cannot or will not accommodate to his own chosen elegiac and individualistic life, while at the same time he is clearly tempted by the masculine values and dominance that this ideology represents (see Miller 2004, 130–59 for an explanation of why Propertius “displays both a newfound closeness with the imperial

regime and a refusal of its embrace,” 130). There are many other patterns of such patron-protégé relationships we might have chosen that do not fit into these two models. But in the last analysis, the institution of patronage must be seen as pervasive in Roman society in its many different manifestations and as an important part of the social fabric that encompassed and defined the Roman elegiac poets. Literary patronage became a part of the discourse of daily Roman life, bridging a gap between social reality and literary construction, revealing a set of power relations that play out in the metaphors and the social practices of the Roman elegiac poets.

FURTHER READING

There are a great many books on political patronage; these can be found in the bibliographies in the books listed in this essay. The books and articles that I have cited are mainly focused on literary patronage, my central topic. For good general work on literary patronage in the late Roman Republic and early Empire, see Gold (1982a, 1987), Saller (1982, 1989), and White (1978, 1982, 1993, 2007); see in particular Saller 1982 and White 1993. Gold 1982a, an edited book, contains often-cited articles by White, Wiseman and Zetzel. Wallace-Hadrill (1989a), an edited book, contains a number of interesting articles on patronage in Greece and Rome, many of which are more political in nature. For valuable lists of Roman writers, their writings, their social status and their contacts in Rome, see Stroup 2010, Appendix (274–90, “What ‘Society of Patrons’? A Prosopography of the Players”) and White 1993, Appendix 1 (211–22, “The Social Status of the Latin Poets”); Appendix 2 (223–65, “Connections of the Augustan Poets”). Bowditch 2001 contains a good discussion of patronage and gift economy/exchange with reference to anthropological work on this topic. Scholarship on the individual Roman authors mentioned in this essay will be found in my bibliography here, in the bibliographies of the works cited, and in the bibliographies of other essays in this volume (especially Bowditch, Keith, Leach, and Miller).

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CHAPTER 20

Elegy, Art and the Viewer

Hérica Valladares

Eyes Wide Shut: Elegy as a Visual Medium

non iuvat in caeco Venerem corrumpere motu
si nescis, oculi sunt in amore duces.

It's a shame to spoil love by fumbling in the dark.
In case you don't know, the eyes lead us in love.
(Prop. 2.15.11–12)

(All translations in this chapter are my own)

The intensely visual quality of Latin love elegy, especially in the work of Propertius, has long attracted scholarly attention (Boucher 1965: 41–64; Hubbard 1984; O'Neill 2005; Bowditch 2009). At a very essential level, elegy's visuality stems from the subject of these poems, namely the pleasures and tribulations of the poets' love affairs. As Propertius' well-known couplet cited above succinctly states, vision is an integral aspect of the erotic. But if we take a closer look, this seemingly straightforward declaration of vision's primacy in the erotic experience reveals itself to be far more complex. In a sensitive analysis of Elegy 2.15, Joy Connolly describes these verses as a joke and a tease (Connolly 2000: 79). Despite its promise of depicting the lovers' activities, the couplet acts as a hinge between two parts of the poem, neither of which offer more than an intimation of their erotic play. The elegy's first ten lines, which are addressed to Propertius' little bed (*lectule*, 2.15.2), refer only obliquely to the "combat" (*rixa*, 2.15.4) and pillow talk the lovers engaged in after the lamp had been put out (*sublato lumine*, 2.15.4). What follows the couplet is even less satisfying: after a series of mythological *exempla* that emphasize the role of nudity in sexual attraction (2.15.13–16), Propertius threatens Cynthia with

violence should she ever come to bed fully clothed (2.15.17–20). Then, at 2.15.23, he passionately proclaims: “While fate allows us, let us sate our eyes with love” (*dum nos fata sinunt, oculos satiemus amore*). Yet no further mention is made of the sense of sight and its attendant pleasures in the poem’s remaining 31 verses.

Through its veiled references to the sexual act, Propertius 2.15 exemplifies elegy’s practice of blocking the erotic gaze instead of revealing its object. Some have seen the elegists’ choice to obstruct the erotic gaze as a form of literary titillation: by delaying and withholding sexual and textual pleasure, the author ensures the continuation of an erotic narrative (Connolly 2000; cf. Barthes 1975). At the same time, the poets’ description of sexual intimacy as either a longed-for goal or a past, ephemeral joy reflects the gendered dynamics enacted by the poems’ protagonists. In the topsy-turvy world of Latin elegy, where the poet’s persona is at the mercy of an elusive, often irascible *domina*, the suspension of erotic action playfully subverts expected sexual and social hierarchies (Greene 1998; Valladares 2005). But shuttering the gaze is also a subtle representational strategy. For by inviting the reader to look, and then excluding him or her from the action in the lovers’ bedroom, poems such as Propertius 2.15 compel the reader to envision what the words withhold. As a visual medium, elegy thus displaces the erotic gaze onto details that, like the little bed in Propertius 2.15.2, become charged with metaphorical and emotional significance.

In the late first century B.C.E., elegy was not, however, the only visual medium to engage in allusive erotic representation. During the first decade of Augustus’ rule (30s–20s B.C.E.), we witness the emergence of a new pictorial style in Rome. Beginning in this period, the walls in Roman houses assume the appearance of fictional art galleries, whose focal points are framed, narrative panels, several of which depict love scenes (Bergmann 1995: 98–107; Leach 2004: 132–155; Zanker 1988: 265–295). Although in most cases the lovers in Roman wall paintings are drawn from myth (Ling 1991: 101–135; Zanker 1999), a series of frescoes from the Villa della Farnesina in Rome presents us with images of erotic dalliance set in a contemporary, domestic context (Figures 20.1 and 20.2). Dated to the 20s B.C.E. (Ling 1991: 41–42; Mols and Moormann 2008: 7), these images, like Propertius 2.15, place the viewer at a threshold. Although we can imagine what will soon unfold, we only see moments of expectation and seduction. The lovers’ interlocked gaze, the touching of hands, lips that part and are almost joined present us with recognizable signs of a drama whose final act will never be disclosed. Here, too, the couple’s pleasure is contained and communicated through a number of metonymic displacements, such as the furniture, blankets and slaves that cloak the paintings’ subject in a mantle of comfort and seclusion. Although they might be termed erotic, these scenes represent not just sex, but romance (cf. Grüner 2004: 211–218).

These parallels between poetic and pictorial representations of lovers in the early Augustan period point to the emergence of a new romantic ideal. Both texts and images give form to a fantasy of an emotionally fulfilling, sensual quotidian existence. In elegy, the poets’ emphasis on the personal, private nature of their liaisons implies a rejection of the principate’s moral reforms, especially the marriage laws enacted under Augustus. Passed in 18–17 B.C.E., but probably already under debate ten years earlier, these laws made marriage obligatory for Roman citizens and dictated which unions could take place (Galinsky 1996: 132–137; Gardner 1986: 32–33, 54, 77–78; Treggiari 1991: 60–80, 264–298; cf. Badian 1985; Raditsa 1980). It also offered rich fare for the elegists’ verses, which adapted these social and civic models for their witty critiques of the state’s



Figure 20.1 Wall painting from *cubiculum* B (det.), Villa della Farnesina, Rome, 20's B.C.E. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale Per I Beni Archaeologici di Roma.

interference in matters of love (Hallett 1973; Gardner 2010). But how can we explain the presence of idealized depictions of erotic intimacy in elite houses such as the Villa della Farnesina? As we shall see, the articulation and diffusion of a Roman discourse on love was a dialectic process. Although it first crystallized in the poets' resistance to Augustan morality, a sentimental, tender mode of eroticism quickly became widespread, manifesting itself in a variety of contexts and artistic media. In order to understand the reception of amatory images such as the frescoes from the Villa della Farnesina, we must closely consider the interaction between elegy, art and the viewers for whom and by whom these fantasies were created.

In this chapter, I trace the elegists' portrayal of private, domestic life. More specifically, I analyze the function and significance of the *cubiculum* (or bedroom) in their poems. Within the bedroom, the lovers' bed becomes the most important symbol of their desire and affection. As such, this everyday object is made to serve a dual function: it is both an evocation of the most concrete, familiar aspects of daily life and an allusion to the unrepresented erotic intimacy shared by the poems' protagonists. The interplay between the perceptible and the hidden is also central to my discussion of the erotic paintings from the Villa della Farnesina. In this case, a sentimental domestic ideal is constructed not through words, but images that strongly reverberate with the elegists' amatory fantasies. Lastly, I turn to later texts and monuments that, while produced by and for non-elite individuals, illustrate the long-lasting impact of elegy's tender aesthetic on Roman



Figure 20.2 Wall painting from *cubiculum* D (det.), Villa della Farnesina, Rome, 20's B.C.E. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale Per I Beni Archaeologici di Roma.

culture. The Pedana Altar (Figure 20.6), dated to the mid- to late first century C.E., exemplifies how artists and viewers adopted the language of elegiac romance to commemorate ordinary, personal experiences—in this case, the loss of a young, cherished bride. Taken together, these three examinations demonstrate how the elegiac ideal was represented, viewed, disseminated, and ultimately codified into a normative vision of conjugal bliss that spread throughout the empire.

From Bed to Verse: Elegy and the *Cubiculum*

In its critique of Augustan moral and social norms, elegiac poetry assigns great value to private, domestic life. The poets' emphasis on domesticity is, of course, part of the systematic subversion of the *mos maiorum* that lends elegy its provocatively countercultural tone. Having embraced a life of love, the elegists abandon the traditional spaces of public recognition – the forum and the battlefield – to seek different pleasures and rewards at home and, more specifically, in the bedroom. In several instances, the analogy between military and amatory conquests is made quite explicit, where the mistress's house and the lovers' bed are equated with the frontlines of imperial expansion (e.g., Tibullus 1.1.53–56; Propertius 2.7.15–18; Ovid *Amores* 1.9; cf. Bowditch in this volume;

Cahoon 1988; Lyne 1980: 67–78). Yet the language of domesticity also becomes a means for the poets to voice their feelings for their beloved. For example, in Elegy 1.11, Propertius powerfully expresses his love for Cynthia in the following terms:

tu mihi sola domus, tu, Cynthia, sola parentes,
omnia tu nostrae tempora laetitiae.

You only are my home, Cynthia, you only are my parents,
you are all the moments of my happiness.

(23–24)

Although I have translated *parentes* as “parents,” this Latin word refers to more than one’s immediate progenitors. In fact, it denotes an extended network of near relations that would have defined and enhanced an adult Roman male’s social standing (*OLD*, s.v. *parens*², 2a). Even more significant is Propertius’ use of *domus* to describe Cynthia’s role in his life: she is his home, his family and his patrimony. Propertius thus subverts the models of Roman familial ideology to present his bond with his mistress as a legitimate marriage more valuable to him than his own patriarchal lineage (cf. Propertius 2.6.41–42; Hallett 1973: 109–110; Gardner 2010: 471–475).

Within the *domus*, the *cubiculum* becomes the principal stage of the lovers’ actions. But, as we saw in Propertius 2.15 and the paintings from the Villa della Farnesina, access to the lovers’ bedroom is always limited. Ovid’s *Amores* 1.5, which regales the reader with a description of Corinna interrupting his siesta for a tryst in the afternoon’s dappled light, may be seen as typical of the elegists’ tantalizing representations of the *cubiculum* (cf. Connolly 2000: 84–88; McKeown 1987: 71; McKeown 1989: 111–119; Salzman-Mitchell 2008).

Aestus erat, mediamque dies exegerat horam;
apposui medio membra levanda toro.
pars adaperita fuit, pars altera clausa fenestrae,
quale fere silvae lumen habere solent,
qualia sub lucent fugiente crepuscula Phoebos
aut ubi nox abiit nec tamen orta dies.
illa verecundis lux est praebenda puellis,
qua timidus latebras speret habere pudor.
ecce, Corinna venit tunica velata recincta
candida dividua colla tegente coma...

(1–10)

It was hot, and the day had passed the noon hour;
I laid my body to rest in the middle of the bed.
One shutter was open, the other closed.
The light was such as one sees in the woods,
like twilight, when Phoebus is fleeing,
or when night has departed but day not yet risen.
It was a light befitting bashful girls,
where timid modesty hopes to be concealed,
when, look, Corinna arrives draped in a loose tunic,
with parted hair covering her fair neck...

In these verses, Ovid tells us about his room and the atmospheric conditions that both presage Corinna's arrival and indicate his state of lustful languor (Fredrick 1997: 182–183; McKeown 1989: 104–109). Although Corinna enters the scene only half-clothed, Ovid soon rips these garments off her body (vv. 13–16). But, like Propertius 2.15, *Amores* 1.5 reveals far less than it promises. After briefly mentioning Corinna's flawless shoulders, arms, breasts, torso and thighs (vv. 18–22), Ovid abruptly concludes:

singula quid referam? nil non laudabile vidi
et nudam pressi corpus ad usque meum.
cetera quis nescit? lassiqueuimus ambo.
proveniant medii sic mihi saepe dies!
(23–26)

But why relate the details? I saw nothing unworthy of praise
and pressed her naked body to mine.
who does not know the rest? We lay down, both exhausted.
May I often have such afternoons as this.

In this partial portrayal of the lovers' intimacy, sex is alluded to through several evocative details, such as the heat, the light, the bed, and Corinna's *déshabillé*. Although it might seem a mere tease, Ovid's poem does more than simply taunt the reader with glimpses of erotic play: it conjures up a mood and a sense of the couple's pleasure. This ardently sensual poem offers, however, no hint of a deeper emotional bond between the protagonists. In the work of Tibullus and Propertius, on the other hand, sensuality is often intertwined with tenderness.

Especially tender are the poets' invocations of sleep either as a prelude to sex or as its aftermath. In several poems, both Tibullus and Propertius offer suggestive descriptions of moments of shared rest with their beloved. In Tibullus 1.1, for instance, the lovers' quiet contentment is set in stark contrast to the natural and political forces that rage outside their bedroom.

non ego divitias patrum fructusque requiro,
quos tulit antiquo condita messis avo:
parva seges satis est; satis est, requiescere lecto
si licet et solito membra levare toro.
quam iuvat inmites ventos audire cubantem
et dominam tenero continuisse sinu
aut, gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster,
securum somnos imbre iuvante sequi.
(41–48)

I do not ask for my fathers' riches nor the gains,
which a stored up harvest brought to my ancient sire:
a small field is enough, enough if I may lie on my bed
and ease my body on my usual mattress.
What a pleasure it is to hear the harsh winds
while I lie and hold my lady in a gentle clasp;
or, when the wintry South Wind sheds icy showers,
to chase after sleep, safe, with the rainfall's help.

In this elegant *recusatio*, Tibullus declares that holding Delia in his arms is dearer to him than either ancestral wealth or riches acquired in distant lands (vv. 49–52), or Messalla's military glory (vv. 53–54). Although his vow of poverty and renunciation of a military career conform to elegiac conventions (James 2001: 228–231; Lyne 1980: 152–159), Tibullus' emphasis on the simple, everyday quality of his love affair lends it a tenderness that is absent from Ovid's more graphic description of his afternoon with Corinna. Unlike Ovid, who lures the reader with evocations of Corinna's nudity and the lovers' mutual pleasure, Tibullus paints a picture of rustic bliss in a familiar setting, where he and Delia sleep peacefully to the sound of the rain. He thus creates the illusion of a homespun, perennial love – an illusion that is shattered when, a few lines later (vv. 55–56), Tibullus describes himself as sitting before his girl's door like a porter (*ianitor*). Access to the mistress' bedroom is thus shown to be ephemeral both for the reader and the poet, who is not always granted the privilege of spending the night with Delia. The brevity and elusiveness of this pleasure retrospectively lend an extra layer of sentimentality to Tibullus' image of the lovers on a stormy night.

A similar evocation of erotic tenderness appears in a number of Propertius' poems, especially Elegy 2.14, where he offers the reader a peek into a night at Cynthia's. After comparing his amatory triumph to the deeds of heroes (vv. 1–10) and praising his new fail-proof strategy (i.e., playing hard-to-get, vv. 11–20), Propertius finally lets us into Cynthia's bedroom.

pulsabant alii frustra dominamque vocabant:
mecum habuit positum lenta puella caput.
(21–22)

Others knocked on her door in vain and called her mistress:
it was next to me the sleepy girl had placed her head.

Like Tibullus 1.1, Propertius 2.14 contrasts the lovers' quiet indoor pleasures with the tumult of the world outside. In this case, however, it is neither wind nor rain that the poet hears from the comfort of the *cubiculum*, but the sound of his rivals' voices. In this reverse *paraklausithyron* (Copley 1956: 77), Propertius rests near Cynthia while her other admirers, who have been shut out for the evening, call out to her in frustration. These two antithetical positions – of being either admitted into the mistress' bedroom or locked out of her house – are here radically compressed. In fact, Propertius' couplet elides the two extremes of the elegiac amatory experience, significantly omitting all that lies in between. In this economic representation of erotic intimacy, the reader is only offered a description of Cynthia as *lenta* (sleepy, languid, v. 22), a word that suggests she is now pleasantly nodding off after lovemaking (cf. Propertius 2.15.7–8). In this context, as in Tibullus 1.1, sleep becomes a shorthand not only for sex but also affection. Instead of Ovid and Corinna's post-coital exhaustion at the end of *Amores* 1.5, Propertius presents us with an image of physical closeness, in which Cynthia appears as a loving bedfellow. The reader and the poet's knowledge that this moment of sweet repose will not last infuses it with tenderness, so that sex and desire are fused with notions of mutual affection.

In Latin elegy, then, the *cubiculum* is the hub of eroticism and emotion within the *domus*. Within the *cubiculum*, however, it is the lovers' bed that most succinctly embodies the elegiac ideal of sensual domesticity. Luxury, privacy, and affection are signified

through this semantically rich object, which is made to represent different facets of the amatory experience. In Tibullus 1.2, for instance, the lovers' bed is mentioned in two separate, but related passages. First, while reassuring Delia that their secret will be safe thanks to a witch's spell (vv. 41–42), Tibullus states that her husband (*coniunx tuus*, v. 41) will believe no accusations of infidelity, even if he were to see them on their soft bed (*mollis...toro*, v. 56). Like Propertius' *lectulus* in Elegy 2.15, Tibullus' *torus* stands for the lovers' unseen and unspoken pleasures. However, the adjective *mollis* (soft) that is applied to the bed also obliquely refers to Tibullus who, as an elegiac lover, has given up traditional models of masculinity (Greene 2005; Fear 2005; Wyke 1994). The expression *mollis torus* evokes a sense of illicit decadence that is further expanded by Tibullus' description of a Tyrian bed later in the poem.

quid Tyrio recubare toro sine amore secundo
 prodest, cum fletu nox vigilanda venit?
 nam neque tum plumae nec stragula picta soporem
 nec sonitus placidae ducere posset aquae.

(75–78)

What good is to lie on a Tyrian bed without a blissful love
 when night comes to be spent awake in tears?
 For then neither down pillows, nor an embroidered blanket,
 nor the sound of soothing water can bring sleep.

Although a Tyrian bed and its accompanying amenities are clearly a sign of wealth (cf. Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 421 ff.), from the elegist's point of view, they are utterly worthless when one is alone. In fact, Tibullus claims he will happily sleep on the untilled earth as long as he has Delia with him (1.2.73–74). Tibullus' comparison between the *inculta humus* (v. 74) and an expensive, imported piece of furniture reiterates his purported preference for rural simplicity over cosmopolitan opulence (cf. Tibullus 1.1.41–48). But mention of the Tyrian bed also effaces differences between the poet and his rival. After all, to whom does it belong – to Tibullus or to Delia's other partner who, the poet hopes, will soon be deprived of her company? In the highly competitive, zero-sum game of elegiac romance, where one man's loss is another man's gain, the lovers' bed becomes also a marker of love's inconstancy and fragility. For this site of pleasure can quickly become an emblem of suffering and deprivation if the beloved is absent.

At the end of Tibullus 1.1, the poet's bed is presented, however, as the symbol of his departure. As Tibullus imagines his own funeral, the bed (*lectus*, v. 43), which features prominently in his earlier rainy idyll (vv. 41–48), is transformed into a bier (v. 61).

te spectem, suprema mihi cum venerit hora,
 te teneam moriens deficiente manu.
 flebis et arsuro positum me, Delia, lecto,
 tristibus et lacrimis oscula mixta dabis.
 flebis: non tua sunt duro praecordia ferro
 vincta, nec in tenero stat tibi corde silex.
 illo non iuvenis poterit de funere quisquam
 lumina, non virgo, sicca referre domum.

tu manes ne laede meos, sed parce solutis
 crinibus et teneris, Delia, parce genis.
 (59–68)

Let me look on you when my last hour comes,
 let me hold you with a failing hand as I die.
 You'll weep, Delia, for me, when I'm laid on the bed
 that is to burn, and give me kisses mixed with sad tears.
 You'll weep: your breast is not bound in hard iron
 nor is your gentle heart made of flint.
 No young man, no young woman will be able
 to go home with dry eyes from that funeral.
 Delia, do not wound my spirit, but spare your loosened hair
 and spare your soft cheeks.

Tibullus' sentimental account of his final hour is, first and foremost, an appeal to Delia to join him in love – an appeal that is made even more emphatic by his reminder of life's brevity (vv. 69–70). It is also a declaration of his ever-lasting affection for her. Through this mournful fantasy, the poet equates his relationship with his mistress with a conventional marriage. Not only does Delia perform the role of a grieving life-long companion in this imaginary funeral, but mention of Tibullus' *lectus* (v. 61) also evokes the laudatory language of Roman funerary monuments set up by and dedicated to legally wedded spouses. In a number of these inscriptions dated to the early imperial period, the wife's fidelity is celebrated through an allusion to the marital couch (Treggiari 1991: 232). Like Propertius' definition of Cynthia as his *domus* in Elegy 1.11, Tibullus' language and imagery in 1.1.59–68 integrates elements of Augustan familial ideology with the elegiac ideal of a passionate quotidian existence. But, as a closer reading of the paintings from the Villa della Farnesina will show, the poets' assimilation of diverging concepts of love, marriage and family resulted in a process of cross-pollination, whereby elegy was absorbed into the fabric of everyday life in Roman houses.

Painted Lovers: Elegy as a Mode of Viewing

Having discussed how Latin elegy acts as a visual medium and privileges the *cubiculum*, and more specifically the bed, as the site of erotic experience, I will now consider how the Roman ideal of a sensual private existence manifests itself pictorially in Augustan domestic interiors. The paintings of lovers from the Villa della Farnesina, of which I will be discussing two examples in detail (Figures 20.1 and 20.2), present us with significant parallels between early imperial art and literature. Particularly striking is how these paintings construct an ideal of sensual domesticity by surrounding the lovers with a repertoire of everyday objects familiar from elegy: not just the bed itself, but also blankets, pillows, silver vessels and slaves appear in these amatory scenes, situating the depicted couples amidst great luxury (cf. Anguissola 2007). But even more than their subject matter, it is the Villa della Farnesina paintings' allusive style of representation that most powerfully reveals their affinity with the work of the elegiac poets. In this context, elegy functions as an interpretive frame and a mode of viewing. Like the poems discussed earlier, these

images hardly portray any action. Instead, they present the viewer with seductive tokens of the painted lovers' anticipation and delight, drawing him or her into a world of affection and imagination that is purposely left incomplete (cf. Fried 1980: 138–141 on Jean-Honoré Fragonnard's *The Progress of Love*).

In the painting from *cubiculum* B (Figure 20.1), for instance, we see a couple demurely sitting on a bed. Clearly this image's centerpiece, the lovers' bed, recalls the elegiac portrayal of *lecti* and *tori* as well as the erotic and connubial associations these objects invariably elicit (cf. Tibullus 1.1 and 1.2). Locked in an intense exchange of gazes with his partner, the man reaches out toward her while she leans back on the pillows. Although his muscular torso is suggestively displayed, the woman is still heavily clothed and her feet, which dangle lightly by the bed, are still shod. Commenting on this disparity of costume, John Clarke interprets the women depicted in the Farnesina paintings as brides who, on their wedding nights, oscillate between reluctance and desire (Clarke 1998: 97, 103; cf. Andreae 1969). But regardless of whether these images represent married couples, the roles attributed here to each of the lovers reverberate with contemporary descriptions of gender-appropriate behavior. For example, in Catullus 61, a poem addressed to a newly married couple, much of the persuasion is directed towards the *nova nupta*, who must be instructed to appreciate both the wealth of her new home and the beauty of her husband (vv. 149–151). He, on the other hand, is said to be all eagerness (vv. 164–169, 188–191). Ovid, too, in the *Ars Amatoria*, a far less chaste manual, encourages men to be aggressive when pursuing women, and women to resist their advances (*Ars* 1.269–370; *Ars* 3.475–478). So what we see in this painting is a conventional, idealized representation of the rapport between the sexes (cf. Myerowitz 1992; Mols and Moormann 2008: 72).

The predictability of this scene does not make it any less alluring, however. The suspension of erotic action invites the viewer to imagine not only what might happen next, but also how and when. The slave girls who frame the couple on the bed are both signs of luxury and markers of time. The pair on the right sends a mixed message: while one of them stares at the lovers, mirroring the viewer's action, the other, in profile, directs her gaze toward the room's entrance. Does her glance indicate anxiety that an intruder might appear to disrupt the lovers' pleasure, or does it suggest that time has come for her to exit? The girl on the left, shown pouring water into a silver basin, is similarly ambiguous. Her amphora, possibly a visual pun referencing the woman's anatomy, might be the most explicit sexual representation in the entire composition. At the same time, the water flowing from one vessel into another is an effective pictorial hour-glass, indicating that, as soon as this slave has completed her task, she and her two companions will turn their attention elsewhere. It is at that point, one imagines, that the couple, finally alone, will move beyond their timid caresses (cf. Mols and Moormann 2008: 74).

In Latin love poetry, privacy is an essential prerequisite for erotic intimacy. For instance, at the end of Catullus 61, the poet commands the maidens in the wedding procession to close the doors of the newlyweds' bedchamber (*claudite ostia, virgines*, v. 227) – a convention later picked up by Ovid who, in a moment of jocular prudery, advises his Muse to wait outside the lovers' room (*Ars* 2.704). In the painting from *cubiculum* D (Figure 20.2), the lovers' need for privacy is enhanced by a sense of urgency. Here, a different couple has progressed to a more advanced stage of erotic intimacy: the woman's breasts are exposed as she wraps her arm around the man's neck to kiss him. It is,

perhaps, for this reason that the nude boy, who stands by the bed holding a drinking cup, has turned his face away and averted his gaze. At the same time, a girl is shown in the act of drawing a curtain before the viewer's eyes, proclaiming that access to this scene will soon be barred. As in the elegiac poems discussed earlier, the paintings from the Villa della Farnesina delineate a romantic fantasy in which sex is associated with privacy and privacy with tenderness – a tenderness that is rendered even more precious through the images' evocation of imminent inaccessibility.

In *cubicula* B and D, the motif of inaccessibility is reiterated through the paintings' format. Although they are realized in fresco, several of these amatory scenes feature painted wooden frames with shutters (Figure 20.3), which mark them as “real” *pinakes*, i.e. small, expensive wooden panels painted with wax that would have been mounted in such protective cases. The illusion that these paintings are luxury objects, which ought to be perused only briefly, intensifies the compositions' sense of ephemerality: the lovers' suspended erotic action, the slaves' threat of impending concealment, and the frame's potential shuttering of the viewer's gaze trigger not only curiosity, but longing – a visual longing that is itself a metaphor for the painted couples' erotic yearning. Here, the desire to see also becomes a desire to inhabit the lovers' tantalizingly familiar, yet elusive world. Even more than in the elegists' bedroom scenes, these paintings fill our vision with objects such as side tables, water jugs, and wash basins that are quite banal. But miniaturized

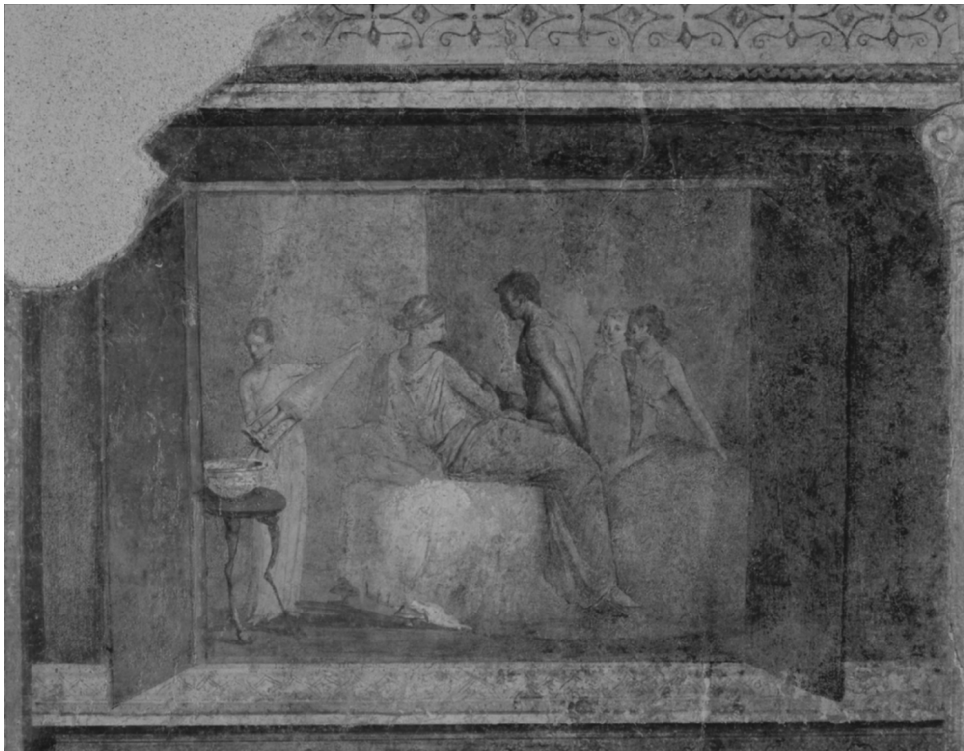


Figure 20.3 *Pinax, cubiculum* B, Villa della Farnesina, Rome, 20's B.C.E. Photo: Soprintendenza Speciale Per I Beni Archaeologici di Roma.

and frozen in time, they become prized components of a fantasy that maps erotic desire onto domestic comfort and intensifies the depicted objects' emotional charge by keeping the viewer always at a threshold (cf. Stewart 1993: 37–69).

The eroticism of the paintings in *cubicula* B and D of the Villa della Farnesina must, however, be considered in the larger context of the rooms they originally adorned. As we can see from the villa's ground plan (Figure 20.4), *cubicula* B and D were located near a large dining room (C). All three of these spaces opened onto a common atrium-like area that, in turn, opened onto an enclosed garden (L). Similar in shape and size, *cubicula* B and D were deep narrow rooms that featured small alcoves for either a bed or a couch (Mols and Moormann 2008: 8, 21). It is, indeed, tempting to see a direct connection

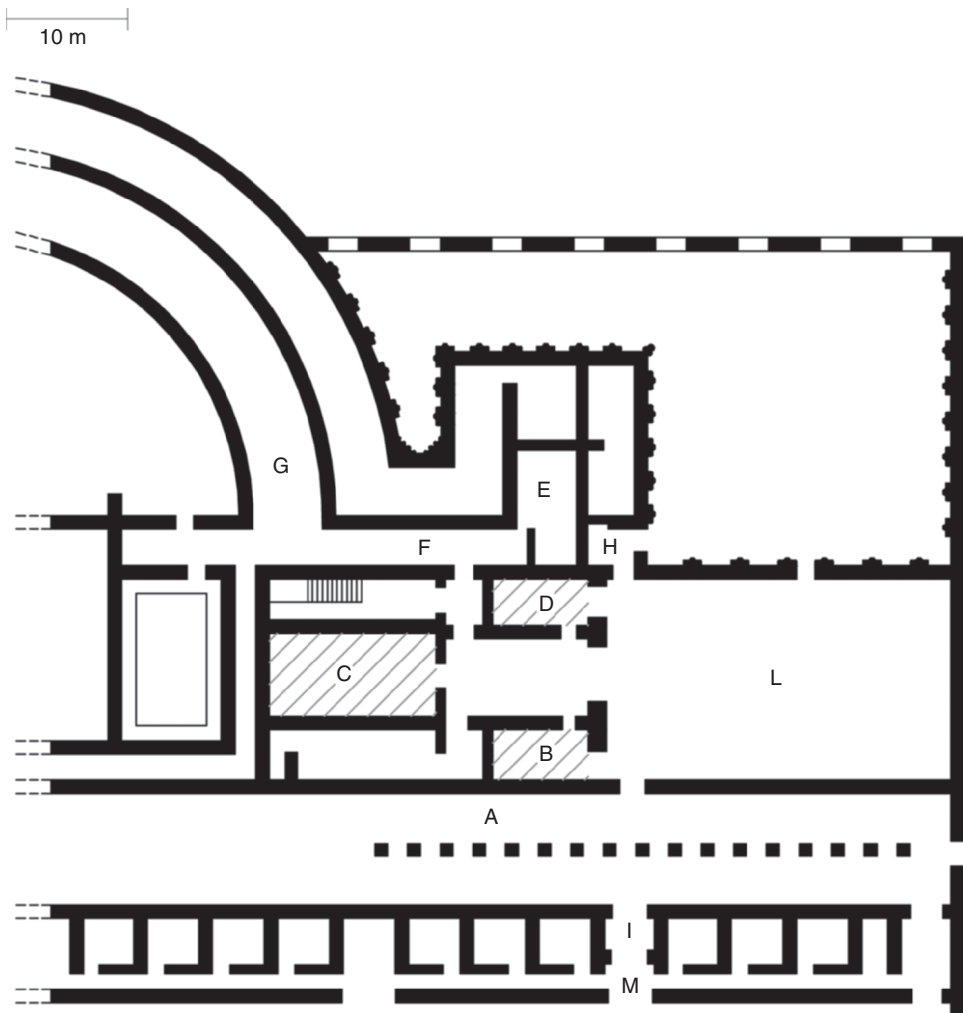


Figure 20.4 Ground plan, Villa della Farnesina, Rome, 20's B.C.E. Drawn by Joseph Stevens after Roberta Esposito in Donatella Mazzoleni, *Domus: Wall Painting in the Roman House* (Getty 2004, p. 210).

between the rooms' décor and their function. But here we must proceed with caution. So far, I have translated the word *cubiculum* as bedroom. Although this translation may be unproblematic when discussing poetic and pictorial representations of erotic intimacy, the term *cubiculum* becomes far more undefined when applied to an archaeological context. Indeed, the word *cubiculum* may be used to describe a variety of small domestic spaces utilized for widely different purposes (Riggsby 1997). Moreover, for the Romans, domestic spaces were polyvalent structures whose function was primarily defined by the social rituals that took place in them. The use of rooms in a Roman house could, then, easily change according to the time of day, the seasons, and certain extraordinary circumstances, such as the birth of a child or the arrival of a very large number of guests (Leach 1997).

Although it is possible that *cubicula* B and D might have been used as bedrooms, their proximity to a dining room and a garden suggests that they were more likely conceived as part of an entertainment suite, typical of late republican and early imperial elite villas. Such dining-room-*cubicula*-garden ensembles were often the most lavishly decorated areas in a Roman house, clearly designed to delight and impress the owner's guests (Clarke 1998: 157; Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 52–57). Quite appropriately, the walls of *cubicula* B and D, which feature a variety of paintings of different subjects and styles, recall those of an actual art gallery (Figure 20.5). The paintings of lovers we have looked



Figure 20.5 *Cubiculum* B, Villa della Farnesina, Rome, 20's B.C.E. Photo: Scala/Art Resource, N.Y.

at so far are, then, part of a larger collection of art works – a *pinacotheca* – in which representations of an ideal, sensual existence were interspersed among other genre scenes and large mythological panels. Created for the gender-integrated spaces of a Roman house (Wallace-Hadrill 1996), the paintings of *cubicula* B and D give form to a dream-like vision of daily life where romance becomes an essential element of refined leisure.

After the great turmoil of the civil wars, it is not surprising that a new generation of Roman artists and poets turned their attention to the joys and sorrows of private life. They found a ready audience among a well-to-do aristocracy all too eager to put the hardships of the recent past behind them. This turn toward the intimate and the personal has been seen as a form of escapism – a conscious withdrawal on the part of individuals for whom the prestige of public office was either no longer available or held far less appeal after the extreme political instability of the late Republic (McKeown 1987: 30–31; Zanker 1988: 28). But the re-valuation of domesticity in the early years of Augustus' reign also points to a larger phenomenon. Unlike the elegiac poems of the late first century B.C.E., which are rife with political irony, the erotic paintings from the Villa della Farnesina present us only with the sweeter aspects of an amatory experience. Embedded in a larger collection of precious images, they are part of an elegant fantasy, where life peacefully unfolds amidst great luxury. While the elegists subversively coopted the language of Augustan morality by applying it to relationships that fell outside the boundaries of licit sexuality, the painted lovers from *cubicula* B and D deradicalized the poets' countercultural ideal by incorporating it into the décor of an elite Roman *domus* (cf. Mols and Moormann 2008: 7). Sexual attraction, pleasure and mutual affection were now portrayed as interconnected, desired components of quotidian existence in a new vision of private life, where romance and marriage were no longer mutually exclusive.

Written in Stone: Elegy Beyond Augustan Rome

Although Latin love elegy first flourished in Rome, it quickly traveled beyond the imperial capital and the court. The most eloquent testimony of elegy's widespread popularity is a papyrus fragment, containing a few verses by Cornelius Gallus, found in Egypt in 1978. If we accept that these nine verses came from Gallus' first book of elegies, dated to ca. 45 B.C.E., then they would have arrived at the Roman fort in Qasr Ibrîm, in Lower Nubia, within two decades of their publication (Anderson, Parsons and Nisbet, 1979). Closer to Rome, in Pompeii, numerous graffiti throughout the city record the enduring appeal of elegiac poetry long after the death of Ovid, the last of the canonical Latin elegists. These late-first-century texts, produced primarily by anonymous authors, range from relatively accurate citations of well-known verses (e.g., *CIL* IV 3149, recalling Ovid *Amores* 1.9.1) to playful, often graphic adaptations of elegiac motifs (e.g., *CIL* IV 1830, echoing Ovid's didacticism in the *Ars Amatoria*). A few examples, however, document the Pompeians' more tender side. In a *cubiculum*, for instance, two names were inscribed on a wall: Lucius Clodius Varus and Pelagia, who is identified as his wife (*coniunx*) and with whom, one imagines, he must have shared this space (*CIL* IV 2321; Varone 1994: 150). In Pompeii's Basilica, a moving celebration of a love that had lasted into old age could also be seen amidst numerous other inscriptions (*CIL* IV 1791; Varone 1994: 152–153).

No monument, however, synthesizes elegy's impact on images and texts produced by and for non-elite Romans more elegantly than the funerary altar dedicated to Pedana, now in Port Sunlight, England (Figure 20.6). First recorded in Rome in the early fifteenth century, it passed through several collections, until it was purchased by a Liverpool banker in the mid-nineteenth century. Although fairly well preserved, the altar's sculptural relief was recut, possibly in the eighteenth century, when a restored base and top may also have been added. Based on the iconography and style of the relief, this monument has been dated to the mid- to late first century C.E. (Boschung 1987: 103–104; Waywell 1982 and 1986).



Figure 20.6 Pedana Altar, Mid-to Late 1st century C.E., Lever Collection, Port Sunlight, England. Photo: Archäologisches Institut-Arbeitsstelle für Digitale Archäologie/Cologne Digital Archaeology Laboratory.

The altar's sculptural relief presents the essential features of a *Totenmahl* or funerary banquet scene. Commonly found on monuments dating back to the Classical and Hellenistic periods, such images of diners portray the men reclining on a couch, while the women modestly sit up (Dunbabin 2003: 114; Roller 2003 and 2006). Nonetheless, in the Pedana altar, an unusual note of tenderness is communicated by the figures' interlocked gaze and affectionate gestures: while he is shown placing his hand on her neck, her own reciprocating touch is concealed by his arm and voluminous garment. Much like the lovers in the painting from *cubiculum* B in the Villa della Farnesina (Figure 20.1), the couple on the Pedana Altar is represented in a moment of suspended erotic action: the woman's proper posture contrasts with the man's languidly reclined body and, even though signs of intimacy are clearly visible, the threshold of decorum is maintained. Here, too, the depicted household objects take on a special valence. The three-legged table with cloven-hoofed feet and the dining couch are status markers that cast the dedicator, Donatus, and his wife, Pedana, possibly ex-slaves, as participants in an aristocratic fantasy similar to that illustrated in the Farnesina *pinakes*. Dining and its accoutrements thus become emblems of a larger idealization of private life, where sex, affection, comfort and social legitimacy are closely interconnected (Roller 2003: 388; Roller 2006: 135–137). The couple's dining couch, often referred to by scholars as a *kline*, would also have been called either a *torus* or a *lectus* by the Romans. Like the elegists' bed, the couch in a *Totenmahl* was a semantically rich sign: it referred of course to the banqueting couches used in real-life *convivia*, but it also evoked the *lectus* on which one slept, lay in sickness, died and was subsequently displayed (Dunbabin 2003: 110–111; Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 429–435). As in the poems and paintings from the late first century B.C.E., the images on the Pedana altar offer the viewer a glimpse of an imaginary quotidian existence, where objects and gestures become symbols of an amatory and, in this case, conjugal ideal.

The altar's inscription expands and reinforces the elegiac tone of the sculptural relief. The text of *CIL* VI 17050 reads as follows:

Ingratae Ven[e]ri spondebam munera supplex,
 erepta, coiux, virginitate tibi.
 Persephone votis invidit pallida nostris
 et praemature fun[e]re te rapuit.
 Su[p]remum versus munus Donatus et aram
 et gratam scalpsit, docta Pedana, chelyn.
 Me nunc torquet amor, tibi tristis cura recessit,
 Le[t]haeoque iaces condita sarcophago.

(NB: for alternate spelling *coiux* in
 v. 2, see *OLD*, s.v. *coniunx*)

A suppliant, I was making offerings to ungrateful Venus
 after you, wife, had lost your virginity.
 Pale Persephone envied our prayers
 and snatched you away in a premature death.
 Donatus carved a last offering: a verse, an altar
 and a pleasing lyre, learned Pedana.
 Now love tortures me, but for you sad care has departed
 and you lie buried in a sarcophagus of forgetfulness.

Donatus' last words to his wife are suffused with elegiac motifs and sentiments. In these verses, death becomes the ultimate closed door, and Donatus' response to this separation is articulated in typically elegiac terms: while love tortures him (*torquet amor*), Pedana is said to no longer care – because she is no longer alive, of course, but also because she is cast as the inaccessible mistress of Latin love poetry. Donatus tells us that Pedana was learned (*docta Pedana*) and for this reason he has offered her these last gifts: a poem, an altar and a pleasing lyre (*gratam chelyn*). But was she truly learned or are these attributes also part of an idealized, elegiac portrayal of the deceased? After all, the elegists often describe their mistresses as *doctae* and praise their performances to the sound of Apollo's instrument (cf. James 2003: 21–25).

The word *sarcophago* in the inscription's final verse is also significant: not attested in Latin prior to the second century C.E. (*OLD*, s.v. *sarcophagus*²; Waywell 1982: 241), its presence suggests that this might be a “recycled” altar, reinscribed and reused decades after it was first made. If so, what we see in this monument is a mix of the formulaic and the personal – a set of clichés, but also possibly a genuine expression of affection. The Pedana Altar is a pastiche of words, images, concepts and styles that have been emptied of tension and ambiguity and transformed into a symbol of ideal conjugality. As such, it represents the endpoint of a process that had already begun in the late first century B.C.E. The forces and structures that contributed to the rise of Latin love elegy and the formation of a Roman aesthetic of tender eroticism under Augustus did not remain unaffected by these cultural products. To the traditional notions of fidelity (on the woman's part) and of the longevity of marriage, the Augustan age introduced an important new element: the condition of falling in love with one's spouse (cf. Foucault 1986: 77–80). Although this was not strictly necessary, it was perceived as highly desirable, especially in the case of young couples. In the climate of Augustus' moral reforms, this search for a fulfilling, passionate sexual relationship within the bonds of matrimony resulted in the transfer of elegiac amatory ideals to the commemoration of spouses in Roman funerary monuments (Treggiari 1991: 259–261). The Pedana Altar is, then, more than just a document of ancient funerary and sculptural practices – it is an expression of desires and expectations that, by the second century C.E., had become mainstream in Roman society.

Conclusions

Having traced the construction of an ideal of sensual domesticity in Latin elegy, and the visualization of this fantasy in works of art from elite and non-elite settings, we may now draw a few conclusions about the interaction of elegy, art and viewers in the early Roman empire. Primarily heterosexual, the elegists' countercultural romantic ideal was quickly absorbed into a new familial, amatory discourse that emerged in the early years of Augustus' reign. The marriage laws passed in 18–17 B.C.E. reflected a long-standing debate not only on the nature of matrimony but also on Roman definitions of family and citizenship. They provoked a strong reaction, especially on the part of the aristocracy, who perceived them as an unprecedented appropriation by the state of matters traditionally regulated by individual families (Tacitus, *Annales* 3.25–28; cf. Cantarella 2002; Cohen 1991). Latin love elegy might, then, be seen as a poetic expression of the elite's dissatisfaction with these social and political changes. Self-proclaimed outcasts, the Roman elegists

present their all-consuming love for their *dominae* as a life-long commitment, which bars them from fulfilling their duties as citizens. Yet their emphasis on the private pleasures of a life of love resonated with a larger trend in Roman society away from public ambition and toward new forms of personal fulfillment. Through its combination of witty irreverence and sentimental conservatism, elegy offered a malleable model for individuals interested in articulating and visualizing tender affection.

Still, the incorporation of an elegiac sentimentality in more conventional depictions of domestic, conjugal life did not entail a straightforward suppression of the poems' critical edge. The erotic *pinakes* from the Villa della Farnesina evince a subtle dialogue between poetic and pictorial representations of lovers in the late first century C.E. For some, who have argued that the villa belonged to Augustus' daughter, Julia, and her much older husband, Agrippa, these paintings were meant as visual encomia of the joys of marriage (Myerowitz 1992: 138–139; cf. Beyen 1948: 14–21). But more generally, these images attest to the rise of a Roman aesthetic of tenderness that transformed sex into romance by linking it to notions of privacy, luxury and exclusivity. Moreover, their placement within an elite Roman *domus* calls attention to the self-conscious mirroring between reality and representation: while the everyday objects in the painted lovers' bedrooms rendered these scenes lifelike, the paintings themselves imbued life in these spaces with an aura of sensual delight. In this context, love and its attendant pleasures appear as a desired aspect of *otium* in an alluring vision of domestic life.

Finally, the Pedana Altar represents a later stage in the process of diffusion and metamorphosis of the elegiac ideal. In this moving commemoration of a short-lived marriage, the elegists' conventions for describing their relationships with their mistresses serve as a powerful, easily recognizable model for a husband's final tribute to his wife. Widely known and frequently imitated, Latin love elegy had, by the second century C.E., become part of a popular Roman discourse on the emotions. Like the heroes and heroines of myth, who are frequently depicted in similar funerary settings (Koortbojian 1995; Zanker and Ewald 2004), the lovers of Latin elegy ultimately became abstract manifestations of intense emotions – symbols of an affective ideal that was now an integral part of a *de facto*, if not *de jure* definition of marriage. Like Tibullus 1.1, the Pedana Altar fuses amatory and funerary imagery, transforming a scene of everyday life into a representation of everlasting love. For a contemporary viewer of the Pedana altar, the decorously affectionate image of a banqueting couple and the inscription's elegiac language no longer represented a contradiction. Indeed, they might have seemed so conventional as not to be deemed worthy of a second glance.

FURTHER READING

Although the relationship between Roman art and literature has drawn great scholarly attention in the past two decades (e.g. Elsner 1996 and 2007; Leach, 1988; Squire 2009), few studies have focused specifically on the parallels between Latin love elegy and visual representation. Boucher's disquisition on Propertius' *sensibilité visuel* (1965) is a classic. On the subject of visuality in Latin love elegy, see also Bowditch (2009), Connolly (2000), Fredrick (1997), Hubbard (1984), and O'Neill (2005). For explorations of a closer connection between Roman wall painting and elegy,

see Grüner (2004), Leach (1980), and Valladares (2005). On Propertius' symbolic use of Roman topography in Book 4, see Tara Welch's important work (Welch 2005a, 2005b).

Since its discovery in the late nineteenth-century, the Villa della Farnesina has been the subject of intense study. Stephan Mols and Eric Moormann's recent publication (2008) offers beautiful illustrations and a succinct summation of this monument's history and interpretations. The updated bibliography at the end of Mols and Moormann's volume will prove most useful to future scholars. Bergmann (1995) and Wyler (2006) on the incorporation of Greek pictorial styles in early imperial wall painting are also worthy of attention. On the Pedana Altar, see Boschung (1987), Roller (2006) and Waywell (1982, 1986). On funerary banquet scenes, see Dunbabin (2003) and Roller (2003, 2006). On the language and imagery of funerary monuments dedicated by and to legally wedded spouses, see Koortbojian (1995), Treggiari (1991) and Zanker and Ewald (2004).

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CHAPTER 21

Performing Sex, Gender and Power in Roman Elegy

Mary-Kay Gamel

One evening an actor asked me to write a play for an all-black cast. But what exactly is a black? First of all, what's his color?

Jean Genet, *The Blacks*

The debate among feminist (and other) readers about the portrayal of women in Roman elegy continues unabated after more than thirty-five years. That these poems offer detailed portraits of individual women, complex reflections on male-female relations, strong indications of the importance of women to men, is clear. Whether these portraits have anything to do with “real” women and men, and whether the poems support or critique male and female behavior is not. The variety of feminist readings of Roman elegy reflects the richness and ambiguity of these poems, and suggests that definitive conclusions on these questions are unlikely. I shall not offer here another reading of individual poems; instead, I propose a change of perspective, a different way of “reading.”

Many of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century readers of Roman elegy have thought of these poems as texts composed in writing and intended for silent reading by individuals, since that is what “reading” means for literate Westerners. This assumption, however, ignores the very different conditions of poetic composition, presentation, and response that prevailed in the late republic and early empire, conditions that involved *dramatic*, *communal* performance and response. Roman elegy and Roman drama share more than themes, characters, situations, and vocabulary; Griffin 1986, 198–210 offers an overview of the influence of drama on poetry; see also James’ contribution to this volume (“Elegy and New Comedy”). Although both dramatic and poetic works were recorded in writing, their production and consumption often involved oral delivery and performance. Every elegist would have expected that the poems would be performed in dramatic readings; Baker 2007 even argues that modern lyric poetry, despite its intense interiority,

“is still, and is powerfully, a public art.” My central point in this essay is that performance – speaking aloud, perhaps to an audience – is a format that can bring out dimensions of elegy that are less available in solitary, silent reading.

1. Performance and Reading

Quinn (1982, 83–93, 140–65) offers a detailed overview of the evidence for the oral/performative aspects of literary production and reception in Rome. Roman children learned how to read by reading aloud. Quintilian mentions vocalization before understanding: “Only through practice will a boy learn where he should take a breath, at what point he should pause to show the metre, where the sense ends or begins, when the voice should be raised or lowered, what vocal modulation each phrase should get, when he should speak slower or faster, with more or less intensity” (*I.O.* 1.8.1; translations from Latin in this essay are mine). When memorizing, “the mind should be kept alert by the sound of the voice, so that the memory is aided by the double effort of speaking and listening” (11.2.33). When a written passage was assigned, the teacher read it aloud and explained it; then all the pupils read it aloud one by one (Marrou 1956, 284–89). As Svenbro says, “Reading aloud does not separate the eye from the ear. What is ‘recognized’ in the act of reading is ... the meaning of the sound sequence mechanically produced but not yet understood by the reader who pronounces the written signs for his own ear ... which is infinitely more accustomed to seize upon the gestalt of an unknown sentence than his eye is” (1993, 165–66). Roman secondary education aimed to create proficiency in speaking, not writing. Writing was a means to improving one’s power as an orator, and the study of literature was intended to provide examples to use in speaking, often with little regard to authorial intention or the integrity of the written work. Students studied the best authors closely in texts without punctuation or gaps between the words, so that they *had* to be read aloud to be understood. Even for adults, “reading” often meant listening to others. When Augustus couldn’t sleep, he called for readers and storytellers instead of reaching for a text (Suet. *Aug.* 78), and Pliny mentions members of his household who have become his favorites because they are such good readers (*Ep.* 5.19; 8.1).

Composition too often had an oral/aural dimension. Poets and orators often dictated their works to secretaries (Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.92; Pliny *Ep.* 9.36), and this performance activity influenced what was written. Quintilian is an interesting case in point. Writing is central to the scheme he lays out for the training of an orator: “by writing we may speak more precisely, by speaking we may write more readily” (*I.O.* 10.7.29). Throughout, however, he is much more concerned with speaking than with writing. Composition is preparation for oral delivery; its aim is never to create a perfect literary object: “a written speech is merely a record of one that has actually been delivered” (*I.O.* 12.10.51). The very process of writing is physical; Quintilian discourages dictation because the presence of a secretary will inhibit “the gestures which accompany mental excitement and sometimes themselves stimulate the mind, such as waving a hand, frowning, hitting the forehead or the side from time to time” (*I.O.* 10.3.21) – gestures he obviously assumes are basic to good composition.

Public recitations were a way of making literary works and their authors famous. Authors were known not only by the nature of their compositions but by the effectiveness

with which they performed them; Vergil and Statius were considered especially gifted (Quinn 1982, 87; Juv. 7.83–87). Writers performed their own compositions, both prose and verse, in various venues, ranging from small gatherings of friends to more formal occasions such as appearances at court and large public occasions including the theater, where poems were sometimes performed with musical and choreographic accompaniment (Tac. *Dial.* 13; Ov. *Tr.* 2.519–20). When Ovid reviews the poetry important to him, he refers not to reading but to hearing the poets perform their works (*Tr.* 4.10.41–50). Like oratorical and stage performances, performance of literary texts included gestures. Pliny frequently regrets that he is a poor performer (*Ep.* 5.3, 8.21) and wonders what he should do while someone else reads his work: *quae pronuntiabit, murmure, oculis, manu prosequar?* “should I imitate what he says with my voice, facial expressions, and gestures?” (*Ep.* 9.34). Poets “probably thought of their texts just as actors and theatre directors think of their scripts – as something that must be interpreted with the whole body, something that must be fleshed out and vivified with all the resources the skilled actor, guided by his director, can bring to that task, as something whose rhetorical energies and visual and verbal glories would only realize their potentialities in the actuality of performance” (Johnson 1993, 35). All rhetorical works stress the importance of delivery, and Quintilian set out to provide a lexicon in which qualities of posture, gesture, costume, vocal projection and the implications of each of these are categorized in very precise detail (*I.O.* 11.3.61–184). The performance of a literary text often affected its audience as powerfully as did fully staged performances of dramatic works; Octavia fainting when Vergil performed his depiction of her son Marcellus as a shade in *Aeneid* 6 is only the most famous.

Knox 1968 demonstrates that silent reading did occur, but in the process suggests that reading aloud was far more widespread. This was a physical as well as intellectual activity: “I read a Greek or Latin speech aloud and with emphasis, not so much for the sake of my voice as my digestion” (Pliny *Ep.* 9.36; see Gleason 1995, 88–91). And orality does not cease even when readers read silently; there is no such thing as absolutely silent reading: “Leaps in electrical activity, indicative of some degree of ‘speech’ activity ... will be found to occur even during silent reading ... Intellectual comprehension seems the very type of a ‘purely mental’ activity, yet, apparently, laboring to understand a text is also, in some degree, physical labor” (Cole 1992, 36). For all his technological determinism Ong frequently alludes to the ongoing interaction between literacy and orality: “Written texts all have to be related somehow, directly or indirectly, to the world of sound, the natural habitat of language, to yield their meanings. ‘Reading’ a text means converting it to sound, aloud or in the imagination ... Writing can never dispense with orality” (1982, 8). Such a change of perspective suggests that writing, instead of being a superior form, must find “lexical and syntactic devices which can compensate for what is lost” when oral communication is “fixed” in writing (Olson 1994, 111).

Approaching literary texts as scripts for performance, therefore, requires rethinking deeply held assumptions. As Finnegan says, “The essential thing about a literary work was for long taken to be its text, a permanent written formulation distinct from, and seen as somehow possessing a timeless validity quite other than, the ephemeral process of writing, reading, enacting or experiencing the work.” (1988, 124). Reading is often assumed to involve only sight, the most “intellectual” of the senses. Some scholars (McLuhan 1964 and Ong 1982, for example) construe “orality” and “literacy” as

opposed technologies connected to different stages in human development, and the ideologies of progressivism and technological determinism declare the later stages superior. Thus orality is identified with physicality, emotion, locality, communality, ephemerality; literacy with intellectuality, reason, abstraction, individualism, permanence. Gender is implicitly involved here, with orality figured as female, writing as male.

Recent academic criticism of Roman literary texts shares these assumptions. Conte 1994 heaps scorn on performance: Rome in the first century C.E. “is populated by large masses of Italians and urbanized provincials, to whose simple taste, sensitive to violent emotions, these spectacles can make their appeal ... which necessarily implies a vulgarization of the literary product” (403–6). Miller’s study emphasizes Catullus’ work as different in both mode and quality from earlier poetry. In order to emphasize Catullus’ achievement, Miller argues that earlier poets who composed for performance were expressing a “public or paradigmatic” voice (1994, 4), making the text “less an artifact than an event” (8). Only with the development of “a culture of writing” (53) do the conditions develop which satisfy Miller’s criteria for *individual* poets creating poetic *artifacts*. These conditions are a “multileveled interiority” of individual consciousness, collections of poems that “refer back and forth to one another” in a “complex and multifaceted whole” (6), and the possibility for “reading and re-reading” a written text (5). Miller also argues that poets such as these are free to question and reject communal norms in favor of individual ones. So the work of Catullus is “the first extant example of a true lyric collection ... A qualitative break separates his work from that of the earlier Greek monodists” (52). Like Catullus’ collection, the carefully planned poetic collections of Roman love elegy “create the projection of a unique subjectivity whose multiple narrative possibilities are only able to be reconstructed from a careful reading and rereading of the collections themselves” (174).

Fitzgerald’s 1995 subtitle suggests more emphasis on performance than actually happens; Greene 1998 focuses on ideology; and many of the essays in Ancona and Greene 2005 consider “the gaze.” Habinek 2005 mentions “corporeality” but does not take it very far; Liveley and Salzman-Mitchell 2008 concentrate on the narrative dimension of the poems; and Lowrie 2009 focuses on theory and “performativity” rather than actual performance. Braund and Gold 1998, Dufallo 2007 and especially Wyke 2002, 178–91 are exceptions. In an important and thoroughly researched chapter Parker identifies four types of Roman “reading events” – recitations, entertainments at *convivia*, professional *lectores*, and private reading – and argues the “main event” was the last, with all the others “considered and presented as preparatory, ancillary, or supplementary” (2009, 188). In the process he attacks what he oddly calls “the standard view” (the conditions described above which suggest an oral/performance dimension of literary production and consumption); I’d suggest that concentrating on silent reading is far more standard. Asking “Did the republican and Augustan poets write with readers or listeners in mind?” he answers that poets sought “poetic immortality” and that the only medium for achieving this was “written, physically enduring texts” (219). That poets wanted their texts to endure goes without saying, but such exclusive focus on authorial intention is unnecessarily narrow: reader/performer responses need to be taken into account as well.

Something similar to what Barish 1981 calls the “anti-theatrical prejudice” (from antiquity to the twentieth century) is at work here. Scholarship seeks clear answers, while performance is ephemeral and ancient performance impossible to trace. Perhaps most

important, performance destabilizes by insisting on the range of meanings and therefore the possibilities available to the performer. Nevertheless, there is no need to set up an opposition between writing and performance; *both* were involved in the production of Roman poetry.

2. Roman Poetry and Performance

Even in the most reduced form, performance is a completely different mode of experience from silent reading, in that it involves a great variety of cultural codes and values for both performer and audience. As Roach says:

When an actor takes his place on a stage, even in the most apparently trivial vehicle, and his audience begins to respond to his performance, together they concentrate the complex values of a culture with an intensity that less immediate transactions cannot rival. They embody its shared language of spoken words and expressive gestures, its social expectations and psychological commonplaces, its conventions of truth and beauty, its nuances of prejudice and fear, its erotic fascinations, and frequently its sense of humor.

(1993, 12)

My understanding of performance is based on models provided by communication theory. For example, Bauman says, “While the term [performance] may be employed in an aesthetically neutral sense to designate the actual conduct of communication (as opposed to the potential for communicative action), performance usually suggests an aesthetically marked and heightened *mode* of communication, framed in a special way and put on display for an *audience*” (1992, 41; emphases mine). By the last century BCE, Rome was a “culture of writing” (Dupont 1992, 223–24) in which writing was essential to political, administrative, legal and economic functions. Ong has coined a term useful for a cultural situation in which literacy influences oral expression and vice versa – “secondary orality,” a “more deliberate and self-conscious orality” (1982, 136) – and this term fits the Roman situation well. Considering Roman literary texts as scripts for performance offers an interpretive methodology which, by locating these texts in context, questions some contemporary assumptions and offers new insights.

Performance studies even of theatrical genres is a relatively new field, and few scholars writing on Roman elegy take its performance dimension into account. Miller insists that “Catullus never mentions oral performance” and “speaks of poetry only in terms of written works” (1994, 120). It is true that Catullus never refers to large *public* readings of his works. But even Horace, who disdains such public readings (*Sat.* 1.4.73–75) thinks of judges as hearing, not reading, the budding writer’s efforts (*A.P.* 386–89). Here is how Catullus describes two friends amusing themselves composing poems (poem 50. 1–6):

hesterno, Licini, die otiosi
multum lusimus in meis tabellis,
ut convenerat esse delicatos:
scribens versiculos uterque nostrum
ludebat numero modo hoc modo illoc,

reddens mutua per iocum atque vinum.

Yesterday, Oliver, we took it easy
and played around with my notebooks,
since we had decided to be decadent.
Each of us played at writing little poems,
now in one style, now another,
swapping them while we drank wine and laughed.

Like Horace's comments, this depiction is part of Catullus' poetic program, emphasizing improvisation and *sprezzatura* rather than diligence and refinement. But the performative aspects of poem 50 are striking on both the narrative and metapoetic levels. The speaker and his friend are depicted either reading their own poems aloud to each other, or reading each other's silently, or aloud, or (most likely) all three. Sound and rhythmic effects such as *hoc . . illoc . . ioc(um)* 5–6 (suggesting hiccups?) evoke the sound of banter and invite an oral performance of this poem. In lines 7–13 the playfulness changes as the speaker frames his desire in erotic language:

atque illinc abii tuo lepore
incensus, Licini, facetiisque,
ut nec me miserum cibus iuaret
nec somnus tegeter quiete ocellos,
sed toto indomitus furore lecto
versarer, cupiens videre lucem,
ut tecum loquerer simulque ut essem.

I left so aroused by your wit and charm
that food did me no good – alas, poor me! –
and I couldn't close my eyes in sleep,
no, I tossed all over the bed all night
wild with desire, longing to see daylight
so I could be in your presence and talk with you.

Just as the previous day's *versiculi* served as a medium of communication between the two friends, on the narrative level the point of writing poem 50 is not to create an autonomous text but to renew face-to-face contact with the addressee.

The connections with performance become explicit in line 9, when the phrase *me miserum* suddenly introduces a *topos* from comedy. By using this Plautine phrase the speaker invites the addressee and the audience to see him as a comic *adulescens*, embroiled in a hopeless love for an unavailable object. At the poem's end, however, the register changes again as the addressee is threatened with a tragic fate: *ne poenas Nemesis reposit a te* ("Retribution might make you pay," 20). By this point the ambiguities in the poem in terms of genre, character, diction, and tone have multiplied dizzyingly. Is this serious or playful? Is the speaker sincere or ironic? Humble or arrogant? Trying to seduce his friend or to show him up? Or all these things?

Selden describes how certain poems of Catullus generate readings which are "not simply divergent, but diametrically opposed" (1992, 465), putting the reader into "a state of empirical suspense between two irreconcilable positions whose resolution the soliloquy per se will not allow" (471). Poem 50, he argues, "is so constructed as to make it effectively

impossible for the reader to decide between its equally plausible, yet contradictory understandings” (475). As a result, the decorum prescribed by the grammarians (fitting the manner of performance to the matter of genre, subject, and occasion) is impossible. Hence, he argues, Catullus’ poems are unperformable: “If the type of literature to which the piece belongs cannot be determined, there is no sure way to read it off the page” (491). No *sure* way, certainly, but “in oral speech, a word must have one or another intonation or tone of voice – lively, excited, quiet, incensed, resigned, or whatever. It is impossible to speak a word orally without any intonation” (Ong 1982, 102). All performance of written texts is interpretation: it requires the performer to *decide* among the many possibilities offered by a written text at each particular moment. How fast? how loud? what tone of voice? what gestures? And always, with what intention, to what purpose, and with what effect? Modern actors who use Stanislavski’s naturalistic method spend much time deciding what their characters’ “objectives” are, what they are trying to achieve, in saying particular lines; once they decide on these objectives, the actors shape their delivery accordingly. Stanislavski consistently encourages specificity in these choices, for example by breaking longer speeches into “beats” and finding the objective for each beat (Stanislavski 1948, 105–119). To a knowledgeable performer, the state of empirical suspense created by a complex text offers opportunity rather than frustration.

Indeed, poem 50 and other Catullus poems offer far more interesting performance opportunities than do more straightforward texts. Because a performer can manipulate time as a text cannot, contradictory elements can be either minimized or emphasized. A good performer of poem 50 can fully “commit” (as modern actors say) to the poem’s various stances – self-mockery in *me miserum*, open desire in *tecum loquerer simulque ut essem*, threat in the mention of Nemesis – without concern for inconsistencies in logic or genre. And an accomplished performer does not have to choose, indeed is unlikely to choose decorum, the less interesting choice. In lines 18–19, for example, the serious, legalistic tone (*nunc audax cave sis, precesque nostras/oramus, cave despuas, ocelle* “Beware, we ask, lest ye be bold, and shrink/ from spurning my entreaties”) is abruptly broken by the endearment *ocelle* (“sweetie”). The decorous way to perform these lines would be to acknowledge the change of diction by changing tone at *ocelle*. The effect might be like a wink: “I’m only pretending to threaten you; I really adore you.” But if the performer violated decorum by presenting the endearment either deadpan, or stressed as part of the threat, it could mean “My calling you ‘sweetie’ depends on your giving me what I want.” Similarly, posture, movement, and gestures could alternately support or contradict the spoken words and vocal delivery.

Acting teachers demonstrate the possibilities inherent even in very brief interchanges by giving actors simple scripts such as

- A: Hello.
- B: Hello.
- A: Been waiting long?
- B: Ages.

and asking them to perform in different characters, in different relationships to one another, with different objectives, different locations, times of day, historical periods, and of course genders (Johnstone 1981, 33–74). Juxtaposing the choices made by different actors

enacting the same Shakespeare soliloquy (a procedure which video recording now makes easy) demonstrates that a complex text of twenty-one lines makes possible an endless variety of meanings and effects. The precision of remarks such as Quintilian's on every aspect of delivery indicates that Romans knew the power and the implications of various kinds of performance, whether or not they could actually achieve them.

Considering poems as scripts for performance resists the temptation to treat them as evidence for the poet's life, without going to the other extreme of divorcing them completely from the author. Skinner argues that "Catullus' self-presentation as "Catullus" can readily be compared with the similar practices of some rock stars and stand-up comedians who make a habit of working details of their personal lives ... into songs and routines" (1993b, 66–67). But poem 50, like other poems of Catullus, is not limited to performance by the author himself. Consider how Sappho's poem *phainetai moi* is used as the basis for the next poem in Catullus' collection, poem 51. If performed for an interested addressee, this free translation of Sappho could serve as a passionate declaration, and the reward for a good performance might include more than applause. But it allows the performer to take chances safely: if the addressee isn't interested, the speaker is just offering his version of a text written by someone else. The flexible dynamic of face-to-face performance allows different stances and adjustments in the course of the performance.

Identifying poem 50 and other poetic texts as scripts for performance opens many other perspectives for interpretation and understanding. A single performance of a particular text usefully limits the range of interpretive possibilities, both by factors more within the performer's control (delivery, posture) and those less under such control (age, vocal range, body shape, physical surroundings, audience response). Yet reading as performance does not eliminate textual ambiguities or close down interpretive possibilities. Just the opposite: different reader/performers would have chosen different possibilities from among those offered by the text, just as modern readers do. Nisbet says, "Every reading of a speech, as of other works of literature, was to some extent a fresh occasion, like the staging of a play or the performance of a piece of music, and, quite apart from the degree of professionalism, different readers must have produced different effects" (1992, 2). Because of its *provisional* nature, a particular performance may be effective or ineffective, polished or awkward, predictable or idiosyncratic, but it is never "right" or "wrong." In performance logical contradictions are not only possible but are an inevitable consequence of the situation. Such contradictions include the fact that the words spoken by performers both do not belong to them (because written by someone else) and yet do (because they come from their bodies). Moreover, both performers and audience can simultaneously experience both genuine feeling and ironic awareness that such feeling can never be truly "genuine" ("inborn, natural") since it must be expressed in conventional ways (verbal, gestural) in order to be understood by others. Ontologically, no performance is ever the last (though historically it may be). Finally, performance moves the focus away from the author and onto performer and audience. This is a move towards historical accuracy, since ancient criticism pays more attention to the *effect* of the written text in performance than to its form and meaning as a sign-system: "literature is thought of as existing primarily in order to produce results and not as an end in itself. A literary work is not so much an object, therefore, as a unit of force whose power is exerted upon the world in a particular direction" (Tompkins 1980, 204).

3. Performance On-Stage and Off-Stage

The performance of poetry needs to be considered in the larger context of performance in Roman life. Performance official and unofficial pervaded the daily life, both public and private, of Romans. Pliny says, “If I am dining alone with my wife or with a few friends, a book is read aloud during the meal and afterwards we listen to a comedy or some music” (*Ep.* 9. 36), and he promises “comic actors, a reader, a singer, or maybe all three” to a potential dinner guest (1.15). In the face-to-face society of Rome, urban spaces were theatrical stages on which people performed their daily interactions. Often the goal was to establish status, as when clients accompanied their *patroni* to provide support on important occasions:

You will have to borrow some paltry slaves, and possess a few pieces of silver plate, and exhibit these same pieces conspicuously and frequently ... and possess bright clothes and all other kinds of finery, and show yourself off as one who is honored by the most distinguished persons ... and resort to sordid arts in decorating your body so as to appear more shapely and of a higher class than you actually are.

(Epic. 4.6.4).

At times scenes were staged to gain particular ends, as when a wife publicly prostrated herself, begging one of the triumvirs to restore her proscribed husband (*CIL* 6.1527, 31670). Role-playing was not limited to encounters between strangers, but affected all relationships including those between intimates. Familial roles were remarkably codified: towards their nephews, *patrui* (paternal uncles) were expected to be stern, *avunculi* (maternal uncles) kindly (Cic. *Pro Caelio* 25; Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.88; James 1998, 7–9).

Such a performance culture destabilizes modern categories such as “public” and “private,” “self” and “other,” “spontaneous” and “artificial.” “The gaze of others lay in wait for [the Roman] wherever he went, and whatever he did he would be aware of others sitting in judgement over him” (Dupont 1992, 10–11). As Gleason 1995 shows, the gaze of others not only took in the external performance but constantly tried to see whether a man’s behavior matched his deportment. A man who seemed upright could be accused of hidden degeneracy, while one who behaved inappropriately automatically condemned himself to censure. Seneca, for example, praises Maecenas for his humanity, his clemency, his restraint in his use of power, but then insists that his faulty self-presentation – his casual way of dressing and his exaggerated writing style – cancels the praise he deserves (*Ep.* 114.3). On his deathbed Augustus called for a mirror and had his hair combed; some friends were then admitted, and he asked “whether he had played his part well in the mime of life” (Suet. *Aug.* 99). (The emperor’s choice of a genre which depended on improvisatory ability is especially telling.) Augustus carefully drafted not only every public speech he gave but even remarks made to individuals, including his own wife (Suet. *Aug.* 84).

A performance feature common to oratory, the theater, and the reading/performance of poetry is role-playing. Mentions of public performances of poetry involve elegiac works more often than epics (Quinn 1982, 140–58), no doubt because the former’s length, immediacy, and first-person stance gave more scope for effective performance. Exercises called *suasoriae* (advice given to a historical figure contemplating a momentous step, such as Hannibal about to cross the Alps) and *controversiae* (arguing two sides of

a legal case) taught students how to argue different positions from within, thinking in someone else's person. As Quintilian says, "Declaimers assume almost as many roles as do comic actors in their performances on the stage" (*I.O.* 3.8.51). The *personae* that students had to perform in these exercises were often alien to the performer himself in status and gender, but (unlike the performances of status in everyday life) not necessarily higher. In Seneca's *Controversiae* 1.5, for example, the pupil must argue the case of two girls who have been raped by the same man; one girl argues for clemency, the other for death.

The number and lavishness of games, theatrical performances, and public spectacles increased steadily during the late republic and early empire (Edwards 1993, 110–115). These occasions developed into "alternative institutions" to the traditional forms of civic life, with "new ceremonies and a different ritual" (Nicolet 1980, 345). Like all occasions in Roman life, these ceremonies and their rituals were laden with political implications (Nicolet 1980, 343–81; Bollinger 1969; Cameron 1976; Habinek 2005). The theater was an especially important locus for potential demonstrations of public feeling. Cicero's *Pro Sestio* describes how audiences read political implications into apparently nontopical material: "In all the theatrical speeches there was never a single passage in which something said by the author that seemed to refer to current events either escaped the entire audience's notice, or the actor himself did not make clear" (*Pro Sestio* 118; see Bartsch 1994, 63–97). Under the emperors such reactions could be dangerous to the author; Tiberius decided that a tragedy called *Atreus* referred to him, and forced the author to commit suicide (Suet. *Tib.* 61.3). But the emperor risked incriminating himself by responding. For example, an actor singing "goodbye Father, goodbye Mother" illustrated the words by gestures of drinking and swimming, referring to Claudius's death by poison and an attempt to drown Agrippina. At the time, Nero pretended indifference, perhaps "for fear of encouraging others to be equally witty," but later he banished the actor (Suet. *Nero* 39). Ahl 1984 describes how many Greek and Roman authors used figurative speech to express dangerous ideas indirectly, but Bartsch 1994 notes that authorial intention mattered less than performance and reception: "the sources themselves during the first and early second centuries focus *not on the authorial intent behind instances of apparent innuendo but on audience reaction, on the evidence that an audience could make a performance, a recital, or a speech allusive*" (69; original emphasis).

The potential subversiveness of theatrical performance in Rome was accentuated by the fact that acting was forbidden to citizens. Actors "had no independent power base, no ancestry, no dignity, no *Romanitas*" but "the actor's licence to speak was a rare commodity, no longer shared by those who once monopolised authoritative speech" (Edwards 1993, 131, 133). Barton has brilliantly described the paradoxes inherent in the gladiator – "both a version of the Stoic *sapiens*, offering a metaphor of apathy, independence, and contempt for the opinions of society, *and* an expression of intense interaction with, and acceptance of, others" (1993, 34). These paradoxes made sense in a world in which, "with the failure of the aristocratic republic, *dignitas*, social worth, had become a word whose only content was humiliation" (27). She notes that even prosperous equestrians and senators entered the arena, which "offered a stage on which might be reenacted a lost set of sorely lamented values" – self-discipline, freedom, courage, glory (33). The actor and the performer of poetry occupied, I would argue, a position similar to the gladiator's, involving both power and danger. Indeed, the power depended on the danger. By making poetry public, performance made more

explicit poetry's deep connections with Roman political institutions and ideology and with public genres such as oratory and theater. When Augustus banished Ovid for two crimes, *carmen et error* ("a poem and a mistake"), it was quite clear that poetry constituted public speech at Rome.

4. Performance, Power, Sex

Performance puts relations of power center stage – including the relationship between author, text, and performer. There is little agreement, however, about how those power relations are configured. Svenbro 1993 takes an extreme position, formulating the relationship of text and reader as radically asymmetrical, with the reader as passive, submissive, the author active, in control: "the writer makes use of the reader as he would make use of an instrument (3) ... The writer foresees the presence of his writing before the reader ... foresees that meeting, plans it carefully. He counts on the reader and the reading aloud that the reader will accomplish. ... If he lends his voice to these mute signs, the text appropriates it: his voice becomes the voice of the written text. ... His voice is not regarded as his own as he reads. ... Ancient reading indeed takes the specific form of an exercise of power over the voice of the reader. The voice has to submit to the written word. ... The reader has but one means of resistance: he can refuse to read" (44–47).

These assertions are not borne out by the Roman evidence. Authors describe their attempts to maintain control, but also acknowledge the power of performers and audience. Catullus' poem 16 responds to misreadings of the author's erotic verse; Ovid's *amator* tries to control the way his mistress reads his letter, but fails (*Am.* 1.11); the *praeceptor amoris* insists that the *Ars Amatoria* contains nothing offensive (1.31–34), but that did not convince Augustus. Pliny says frequently that he reads his work to others in order to use their reactions to improve it, by getting "a kind of expert opinion to confirm my decision on any doubtful point" (*Ep.* 5.3). He says, "anxiety makes me concentrate all the more carefully" (7.17), so he prefers critical readers to those who simply praise what they hear (8.21). Plutarch's essay *On Listening* describes various good and bad ways to listen to a speaker. Quintilian urges the orator to study literary texts carefully: "reading is free and doesn't hurry past because of the rush of performance; you can go over a passage several times, if you're doubtful about the meaning or want to commit it to memory" (*I.O.* 10.1.19). This does not mean, however, simply discerning the writer's meaning and "submitting" to it: "we must return to what we've read and handle it." The word for "handle," *tractare* (which also means "perform") suggests consciously forming one's own interpretation in preparation for performance.

The questions of voice and power raised by the writing and reading/performance of texts are formulated by both ancient and modern observers in terms of sexual relations. Selden 1992 and Svenbro 1993 use male homosexuality as a metaphor for the relationship between text and reader; the text as active, the reader passive: "to be penetrated, the poem [Catullus, poem 16] submits, is what the poet's readers really want" (Selden 1992, 485); "to write is to behave as an *erastes*: to read is to behave as an *eromenos* ... To read is to submit to what the writer has written, to be dominated, to occupy the position of the one overcome ... To read is to lend one's body to a writer who may be unknown"

(Svenbro 1993, 192). In 1.17–21 Persius portrays both performer and audience as sexually passive:

liquido cum plasmate guttur
mobile conlueris, patranti fractus oculo.
tunc neque more probo videas nec voce serena
ingentis trepidare Titos, cum carmina lumbum
intrans et tremulo scalpuntur ubi intima versu.

You'll wash your flexible throat
with a flowing tremolo, all broken up as your face reaches climax.
That's when you'll see great Tituses tremble
—not the *straight* way! They can't even speak as the verse
penetrates their groin and their insides are stroked by those pulsing lines.

Presumably the author is the virile penetrator who is able to achieve these effects on both performer and audience.

Svenbro 1993 supports his paradigm with examples that involve no choice, only deception—writings such as *ego qui lego pedicor* which lead a reader reading aloud to “admit” that he has been bugged (1993, 190–91). But he acknowledges that the text cannot rape the reader; s/he must agree to be passive: “to write is to be dominant, active, triumphant, *as long as one finds a reader prepared to be amenable*” (192, emphasis mine). An analogous story recounts how a man called Acontius saw a desirable woman in the temple of Artemis. He wrote “I swear by Artemis that I will marry Acontius” on a piece of fruit and rolled it towards her. After reading this “performative” statement out loud, she was forced to marry him. Other versions of this story acknowledge its problematic aspects: Callimachus in *Aetia* 67 and Ovid in *Heroides* 20 emphasize Acontius’ cunning is motivated by love, and in *Heroides* 21, Cydippe answers that she read this letter *sine murmure* (21) and that he should have wooed her instead of tricking her (the interplay of voices and characters in the last six *Heroides* offer wonderful opportunities for the performance of gender). In Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria* the *praeceptor amoris* uses this example to suggest the value of sending letters to a girl one hopes to seduce (I.455–58):

ergo eat et blandis peraretur littera verbis
exploretque animos primaque temptet iter:
littera Cydippen pomo perlata fefellit,
insciaque est verbis capta puella suis.

Let a letter go first, plowed with soft words,
to search out her feelings and test the way in.
A letter on a fruit, read all the way through, tricked Cydippe.
That girl was caught unaware by her own words.

Like many of the examples in this text, this one might be interpreted differently, as a warning that readers should read all texts carefully – including the *Ars Amatoria*. Fitzgerald’s description seems closer to the “ambiguous and kaleidoscopic” relationships between poet, poem, and reader: “the ambiguities of the relations, gestures, and transactions of the aesthetic sphere upset any secure sense of positionality, and it is positionality that is at stake in ancient sexuality” (1992, 441).

5. Performance and Gender

Romans' intense scrutiny of each others' self-presentations focused above all on gender and sexuality. Males needed to avoid all implications of effeminacy or passive homosexuality (Gleason 1995, 55–130). But the effective performance of maleness involved a double bind: to be truly male was not to perform at all, to be autonomous, free, empty of desire, still, unmoving. Any movement, any speech, any attempt to achieve an effect on others – in short, any kind of performance – could be interpreted as a sign of effeminacy. Actors, poets, and orators were especially prone to accusations of “softness,” and the gladiator's performance consisted of strenuously avoiding the appearance of performing, acting unconcerned about his life or the opinion of the spectators. Quintilian frequently refers to stage acting (e.g., *I.O.* 11.3.73–74, 111, 158, 178–80), and just as frequently warns the orator not to perform like an actor, which automatically signifies weakness and effeminacy (Graf 1991, 39). He regularly insists on this point: “The most important thing is that his reading be manly, dignified as well as charming ... not degenerating into sing-song or effeminate in its modulations (as a lot of people do these days)” (*I.O.* 1.8.2); “I want no boy I'm training to be weakened by using a woman's thin little voice, or to tremble like an old man” (1.11.1); “Comic actors make a big mistake when in the course of the exposition they quote the words of an old man or a woman, and pronounce them with a tremulous or effeminate voice” (11.3.91). Quintilian recognizes the logical inconsistency in this pronouncement: “the whole art consists of imitation, but some kinds of imitation are unacceptable” (11.3.91).

Such resistance to certain kinds of performance demonstrates how powerful was the appeal of that performance and suggests that performers were doing exactly what Quintilian rails against; Richlin 1997 provides an excellent discussion of the strictures against effeminacy in Roman rhetorical training, but does not acknowledge how much these strictures suggest the appeal and power of effeminate performance. Moreover, important political figures in the late republic and early empire – Caesar, Antony, Maecenas, Nero – defied, in their public self-presentation, the sanctions against effeminacy. They dressed with care, but unconventionally; they made no secret of their erotic and emotional attachments; they cared about poetry and performance; Griffin compares Antony's self-presentation to that of the speaker of Propertius' elegies (1986, 32–47). For all his attempts to reform Roman morals, Augustus' personal behavior too was subject to attack in the theater: “One day an actor was performing the role of a eunuch priest of Cybele. As he played his drum, another exclaimed: ‘Do you see how a pervert's finger beats the drum?’” The words *orbem temperat* can also mean “sways the world,” so “the audience, taking this as a jab at Augustus, broke into enthusiastic applause” (Suet. *Aug.* 68). In this case, both actors and audience used postures of submission – playing a eunuch, fawning on the emperor – to express defiance. As Barton remarks, “those who would proclaim their freedom had now to do it with behavior traditionally associated with servility and femininity” (1993, 90).

Roman performance, then, no matter what the script, was inevitably charged with gender and political meaning, but the question of particular effects remains open. In a number of important articles Skinner has outlined the connections between erotics and politics in Roman poetry. In an essay on Catullus poem 63 she argues that the

voluntary assumption by a Roman male of marginal, despised subject positions (woman, slave, eunuch) is a political statement (1993a, 116–119). Yet she describes male cross-gender performance as “a fleeting relaxation of stringent psychic controls, a luxurious but relatively harmless foray into sentimental self-indulgence” (120). “Relaxation” and “self-indulgence” do not suggest the physical, emotional and ethical investment involved in performing or the ways in which the activity and significance of performance was conceived in Rome – “defiance” and “rebellion” are equally or more compelling alternatives.

I am not arguing, however, that performing female roles would have “raised the consciousness” of male performers. Modern cross-gender performances suggest the wide range of techniques available and demonstrate that the meaning of a particular cross-gendered performance varies according to how those techniques are used, and to what end; see Gold 1998. In Propertius 1.3, for example, Cynthia’s reprimand of the *amator* for coming home late and drunk (35–46) can be performed as a fierce attack, a whining complaint, an overly tragic pose, or a moving lament. Each of these choices, valid in itself, affects the performer’s and audience’s interpretation of the poem’s overall meaning. Cynthia’s position, *in molli fixa toro cubitum* (“planting her elbow on the soft bed,” 34), is ambiguous, and the “stage directions” carefully avoid specifying how these lines are to be delivered (*ait* 34, not *clamat* or *queritur* or *lacrimat*). But no matter what the choices of a particular performer at a particular moment were, the *process* of choice would have been more conscious and energetic than that of a silent reader. As a man or woman performed the roles of both *amator* and *puella*, putting his/her own voice into the pronouns and her/his own body into the gestures, the reader/performer of this poetry performed his/her own involvement (or critique) in the system of gender construction more consciously and actively than did silent readers, or audience members watching comedies. And the ventriloquism involved in male authors writing “female” roles is much more clearly on display in performance than it is in a text.

Records to help reconstruct ancient performances are few, but analogies with other kinds of performance can be useful, just as studies of South Slavic oral poets have been for Homeric studies. And even the most elementary performance experiments can aid twenty-first century readers to understand the techniques and effects of performing Roman elegy. The catalogue of women devoted to their lovers in Propertius 1.15.9–24, for example, can be presented as a well-organized set of proofs supporting the speaker’s indictment of his mistress’ lack of concern, as an indulgence in self-pity whose illogical juxtaposition of different situations undermines the speaker’s case, or as an example of gender crossing in which the speaker’s identification with the mythic heroines figures his desire for fusion with his beloved. At the 1994 APA meeting, without any preparation whatever, two performers performed these lines (in English) with very different techniques and results. Judith Hallett’s rendition was more detached and ironic, John Van Sickle’s more emotionally engaged. At least, that’s *my* reading, influenced by previous knowledge of the two performers, their gender, the order in which they performed, and many other factors. All performance, however minimal, depends upon and clarifies positionality. I encourage all readers of this essay to make performance experiments using Roman elegiac texts as scripts, and to record and publish the results, as I believe such experiments will move the research into the meaning of these scripts forward exponentially.

In conclusion, let me be clear what I am *not* arguing: that Romans never read silently or in isolation, and that Roman poets never imagined that their poems might be read in this way. Instead I suggest that considering Roman elegiac poems as scripts for performance offers insights that are not available otherwise. Analyzing Roman poetry without considering its potential performative dimension resembles Cicero's description of rhetorical theory without practice: "If you folks think it's enough to learn only the principles taught by academics, you're forcing the speaker out of an immense field into a *tiny ring*" (*De Or.* 3.18.70; note that the metaphors in the phrase *immensoque campo in exiguum sane gyrum* refer to performance spaces). Performance at Rome was a sociological phenomenon of great importance: it offered many possibilities for artistry and creativity in preparation and execution, and its potential for political effect was much greater than that of oratory (on "arts of resistance," see Scott 1990). The "performance culture" of Rome sensitized every participant to the implications of performance. Performances both on- and off-stage were carefully prepared by performers and carefully scrutinized by audiences. They were not casual "entertainment" but significant interactions which released performers from the constraints of authorial intention and encouraged the exploration of varying interpretations. And they were highly unstable, slippery occasions that allowed both actors and audiences to perform and perceive dangerous, officially unacceptable positions. The social setting of performance, even that of the small private party, included women (probably as performers as well as audience), ensured audience response, and heightened the political implications.

In light of the performance conventions of oratory and public presentation, reading—even reading by/to oneself – was an occasion for performance, including physical and vocal investment, and that performance was a mode of thoughtful analysis and interpretation which could enlighten both performer and audience. The reader/performer of Roman poetry read aloud and "handled" the written text, considering its meanings not only visually, silently, and intellectually, but vocally, aurally, and physically. A particular performance choice (especially in dealing with a complex, ambiguous text) always implies alternatives. The provisional and mutable nature of performance acknowledges the potentially wide range of interpretations a complex text requires and reminds all involved that all signifying systems are unstable. Yet the necessity for a performer to "commit" physically and emotionally to the performance avoids the potential nihilism of the *mise en abîme*. Selecting between alternatives makes a performer more conscious of choices, and reading as performance makes those choices more precise and more vivid. A reader/performer invests more – physically, emotionally, and intellectually – in interpretive choices than a silent reader does. And the implications – psychological, social, ethical – of such reading/performance become clearer both to the performer and to the audience. A particular example: in 1997, preparing for a conference lecture called "Performaneutics" which argued that performance always involves interpretation, I rehearsed a (straight) undergraduate actor for a performance of Catullus poem 50. Acknowledging and confronting his initial discomfort with the homoerotic implications of the text was a crucial part of his process.

The performance of elegiac poetry, in particular, offered and offers strong incitements to performers and audiences to question accepted ideas about gender. Performance does not argue but *demonstrates* that gender is performative rather than innate. The interconnectedness of gender relations and power relations offered Roman performers, male and

female, the chance to stage his own vulnerability and exploitation, her own rebellion and rage, in a context that always had the potential for unexpected consequences. Then and now, those performing roles written by others can realize their own freedom and power.

FURTHER READING

Performance studies of classical drama include McDonald and Walton 2007; for Greek drama see Taplin 1977 and 1978, Wiles 1991, 1997, 2000, and 2007; on Roman drama see Slater 1985, Beacham 1992, Moore 1998, and Marshall 2006. Performance studies of Greek poetry include Foley 1991, Nagy 1996, and Stehle 1997. Csapo and Slater 1995 provide a very useful compendium of both Greek and Roman primary sources. On performance in Roman oratory see Graf 1991 and Aldrete 1999. Those interested in the practical aspects of modern performance might begin with Cohen 2008, the most widely used introduction to acting. Cole 1992 makes good connections between acting and reading.

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CHAPTER 22

Gender and Elegy

Ellen Greene

During the last two centuries BCE, the legal and social regulations placed on women in Roman society became less restrictive, especially compared with ancient Greek women who were largely confined to the private spaces of their homes. Nonetheless, there is substantial evidence within the surviving texts of Roman literature that women continued to be relegated to a subservient role and that they were largely regarded as ungovernable creatures whose inherent irrationality and dangerous sexuality required them to be under the constant guardianship of males. The Roman elegists, however, appear to elevate women to a singularly exalted stature – a stature women did not enjoy in real life.

Roman elegy is predicated on clearly defined roles for the elegist and his female mistress. The elegist, typically, portrays the male in the traditionally passive and subservient role of women and, at the same time, depicts the female beloved as masterful, active, and dominant. The elegists often refer to their mistresses as *dominae* (female rulers) who subject their lovers to the torments of abandonment and betrayal. The elegiac enterprise, in general, seems to subvert Roman conventions of masculinity by assigning to the male narrator traits typically associated with women: servitude (*servitium*), softness (*mollitia*), and triviality (*levitas*). The male lover thus presents himself as devoted, dependent, and passive, and in turn often depicts his mistress as *dura* (hard, strong) – an attribute associated chiefly with men. The elegist's apparent servitude to his mistress, at least nominally, accords his mistress complete domination and control over him.

The last two decades have seen an unparalleled flowering of studies on ancient conceptions of gender and sexuality and on the complex dynamics of gender relations represented in Roman literary texts. Roman elegy offers perhaps the most fertile material within Roman literature for examining the depiction and problematization of gender roles. Elegy, with its narrative of an ostensibly feminized male lover and a masculinized

female beloved, raises a host of critical issues concerning male writers' representations of both masculine desire and the female mistress. Judith Hallett's 1973 essay, "The Role of Women in Roman Elegy: Counter-Cultural Feminism," was one of the very first to make the issue of gender the central focus of its scholarship. Hallett argued that the elegists indicated their nonconformity with traditional gender roles by portraying women as dominant and men as subservient, thus deliberately inverting sex roles in their poetry. Hallett's essay reflected the emerging interest within classical studies in representations of women in male-authored texts. This interest is especially relevant to Latin elegy, given its particular focus on the lover's engagement with his mistress and on the portrayal of relations between the sexes. Since Hallett's essay, gender issues have garnered a great deal of attention in scholarship on elegy (Wyke 1987, 2002; Sharrock 1991; Gold 1993; Keith 1994; Greene 1998, James 2003), and have led to lively debate over the last thirty years about the nature of gender roles in Latin elegy and the ways in which the male lover and the female beloved are portrayed. Scholars such as Wyke, Sharrock, Gold, and Keith have argued against the view of the female beloved as dominant, urging instead for a view of the female beloved as an objectified other who is subject to the rhetorical control of the male narrator. Moreover, some recent scholars have suggested that the passive position of the elegiac lover and the representation of his mistress as correspondingly active affords elegists the opportunity to explore alternative models of masculinity, while at the same time elaborating ingenious ways to relegate women to subordinate roles (Greene 2000; Sharrock 2000).

Another major strand of gender criticism on elegy has focused on the figure of the male lover and on the nature of male desire. More specifically, scholars have examined the various ways elegists construct gender identities for their male narrators that reinforce and/or challenge the norms of masculinity in Roman culture (Oliensis 1997; Janan 2001; Miller 2001; Fear 2005; Keith 2008). These critics show, in differing ways, that the feminized persona of the elegiac lover may be undermined by a more typically masculine persona he also adopts – one that is, at least in part, consistent with the conventional traits of a Roman *vir* (courage, self-mastery, dominance). Overall, many recent scholars concerned with the nature of the male lover in elegy have attempted to complicate reductive notions of elegiac masculinity, in order to avoid either aligning the male lover (*amator*) with traditional Roman male models or countering these traditional models.

In what follows, I shall first examine how gender dynamics are represented in the work of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid. While these poets exploit the central fiction of elegy – the male lover as hopelessly enslaved to his domineering mistress – their poems often overturn the conventional powerless position of the male lover. Despite the fact that elegy is predicated on the illusion of male subservience and female power, we shall see from my readings of particular texts that the representation of amatory relations in elegy do, in many ways, closely reflect Roman realities of male domination.

I have divided the rest of the essay into two parts. In the first part I examine poems of Propertius and Ovid that I see as especially illustrative of both gender inversion and the objectification of the female beloved. In the second part, I focus on the construction of the male lover's masculine identity in the elegies of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid. More specifically, I examine how the figure of the elegiac mistress often serves to facilitate for the *amator* (male lover) the strengthening of homosocial bonds in the male arena.

1. Male Desire and the Elegiac Mistress

Propertius 1.3

The poem begins *in mediis rebus*. The male lover is returning to his sleeping mistress after a night of drinking and debauchery. But, unlike most elegies, 1.3 does not establish the narrative context for the poem but instead launches immediately into the world of myth and legend (Curran 1966). From the outset, the male lover introduces us to his mistress, Cynthia, by comparing her to famed mythological heroines while implicitly comparing himself to the corresponding male heroes.

We may begin by analyzing the specific comparisons of the sleeping Cynthia to mythical heroines and how they express aspects of masculinist views of “ideal” amatory relations. In the first *exemplum*, the speaker compares his sleeping mistress to Ariadne as she sleeps on the shore – unaware that she has been abandoned by Theseus. The speaker imagines his mistress in a state of helplessness that allows him to play the role of rescuer. Indeed, in the myth, Bacchus comes and rescues Ariadne from the deserted shore. The drunken lover, like Bacchus, is overcome with desire. The implication is that the image of the stranded and helpless woman evokes desire in the male lover. Moreover, the speaker’s arousal seems to depend on turning his “real” mistress into a static, pictorial object he can gaze at without any resistance or interference from “reality.” The object of desire he imagines, both in the myth and in the narrative context of the poem, lacks agency of her own.

The second *exemplum* of Andromeda’s release by her lover Perseus continues the theme of the male lover delivering a defenseless mistress from danger and abandonment. The implicit link between Andromeda’s release and the sexual consummation of her marriage to Perseus again connects female helplessness and captivity to male fantasies of erotic fulfillment. This association of the sleeping heroine with erotic fantasy culminates in the image of the frenzied Maenad who collapses exhaustedly onto the grass after incessant dances. The three *exempla* become progressively more overt in their connotations of sexuality and thus suggest a heightening of the speaker’s arousal as he constructs fantasies of his mistress. Cynthia seems most desirable to the speaker as long as she remains a *fantasy* – a static projection of his own desires. A particularly revealing feature of the mythical heroines is that they are all in a reclining position, implying both vulnerability and sexuality.

In the second section of the poem (7–20), where the speaker attempts to approach the “real” Cynthia as she sleeps, he continues to treat his mistress as an object of erotic fantasy. The prospect of encounter only evokes another mythic comparison – one that heightens the expression of the speaker’s fantasies of domination and control over a helpless, captive mistress. The speaker describes himself staring at Cynthia as Argus gazed on Io. With his hundred eyes, Argus’ job is to make sure Io remains a captive. Later in the poem (27–30), the speaker expresses his fears about Cynthia being “taken” by another man as he imagines what Cynthia might be dreaming. In view of the speaker’s earlier attempts to approach his sleeping mistress in a way that suggests an “aroused physical state,” it is quite possible to read the speaker’s concern about Cynthia’s dream as a projection of his own sexual desires and intentions. Moreover, the speaker’s gestures

of arranging garlands on Cynthia's head, rearranging her hair and trying to give her apples, reinforce a portrayal of Cynthia as a mannequin-like figure; the speaker arranges her as an artist might arrange a still-life.

Indeed, the speaker's imagination comes alive when his mistress is asleep, when she exists as a *tabula rasa* upon which he can inscribe his desires. Ironically, Cynthia has the last word in the poem. But when she awakens and is presented as a flesh and blood woman with desires and prerogatives of her own, her voice comes as an abrupt, unpleasant intrusion into the rich inner life of the narrator. She is portrayed as a shrew who seems most desirable when she is completely subjected to the gaze of the male narrator – with no voice or agency of her own. By giving us Cynthia's own words, rather than having the speaker narrate them, Propertius makes the transformation of Cynthia more dramatic; this transformation from an idealized object of beauty to an hysterical female is jarring. Propertius portrays Cynthia as *either* a woman who evokes desire through her helplessness and passivity *or* a shrewish nag who destroys the lover's lofty visions of beauty and tenderness. The depiction of the "real" mistress in the poem reflects male stereotypes of women. But the sleeping Cynthia provides the speaker with the opportunity to create images of his mistress projected from his fantasies of domination over her.

Ovid, amores 1.3: violence and voyeurism

Like Propertius, Ovid exploits the elegiac convention of the image of the *amator* as a *servus amoris* ("slave of love"). While the *amator* in Propertian elegy largely maintains the fiction of the devoted, dependent lover and the ideal of *fides* ("trust") upon which that fiction depends, Ovid reveals that the image of the male lover as a *servus amoris* is primarily a rhetorical posture, a ruse for seduction and manipulation. Thus, by implicating his *amator* in a multitude of contradictions and letting us "see through" his manipulations and exploitations of women, Ovid shatters the fiction of the male narrator as enslaved and the female narrative subject as his enslaver. The significance of the *amator's* program of erotic deception and conquest, however, has prompted a good deal of debate and controversy in recent Ovidian criticism. The traditional view toward Ovid's amatory works has tended to dismiss the *amator's* attitudes and practices as merely a part of Ovid's strategy to entertain his audiences with his ingenious wit (Frankel 1945; Wilkinson 1955; Luck 1959; Quinn 1963; Du Quesnay 1973).

More recently, a number of feminist critics (Gamel 1985; Cahoon 1988, 1990; Culham 1990; Richlin 1990; Keith 1994; Greene 1998; Brunelle 2005) have contended that Ovid's poetry ought to be read as a critique of the competitive and exploitative nature of *amor*. These scholars have argued that Ovid's presentation of sexual violence and exploitation of women is a complex literary strategy that serves to unmask and critique the brutality inherent in amatory relations. Ovid's exaggerated representations of violence toward his mistress and his blatantly misogynistic humor, however, remain a controversial area of debate in Ovidian scholarship. Scholars have been divided about whether Ovid is criticizing Roman social mores rather than endorsing them. In this essay I contend that by provoking us into a gradual uneasiness at the consequences of domination,

Ovid's amatory poems invite us to question the perspectives of a lover who espouses and practices conquest and deception as a way of life. I argue that the trope of *militia amoris* (warfare of love), carried to ludicrous extremes in Ovid, serves to expose the cruel and inhumane aspects of *amor*. As Brunelle 2005 argues, Ovid may be seen as a kind of social critic. In what follows I shall examine *Am* 1.3 in order to explore how Ovid's poems not only expose the destructive aspects of *amor* but also reveal male discourses of power and domination over women.

In I.3, the first of seven elegies in which the *amator* is identified with Jupiter, Ovid clearly associates amatory relations with the violent subjugation and deception of female "victims." At first glance, Ovid's *amator* in 1.3 appears to adopt the familiar role of the modest, subservient lover whose lack of status is compensated for by his poetic talent, a talent, he promises, that will bring to the *puella* the same fame accorded to the heroines of mythology.

The ostensible reason for including these mythological allusions is to support the speaker's argument about his ability to confer *fama*. Io, Leda, and Europa serve as examples of women who have been immortalized in verse. But the analogy between these three women and the *puella* also suggests a correlation between their lover, Jupiter, and Ovid himself. The parallel between the speaker and Jupiter stresses the violence and dehumanization in the *amator*'s attitudes and practices toward his mistress. Because of Juno's jealousy about his love for Io, Jupiter turns Io into a cow in order to disguise her. Not only does Jupiter "take" Io, but he robs her of her humanity in the process. In the myths of Europa and Leda, Jupiter exploits their innocent, unsuspecting natures by using deception in order to gratify his desires. In like manner, the *amator* poses as a *servus amoris* in order to persuade his mistress to give herself to him.

The myths he chooses in order to "win over" his mistress suggest a paradigm for amatory relations that completely contradicts the image of the lover as "enslaved" to the woman. Indeed, the female figures in the myths are all captives of the male and, moreover, their "*fama*" comes at great cost to them. Io got *fama*, but at the expense of her humanity and her freedom. In addition, the speaker shows that the power and means he has to get what he wants are greater than those of Jupiter himself. The poet, unlike Jupiter, can write about his conquests and the metamorphoses required to make them. Like the eternal relationship between Jupiter and his three heroines, the speaker claims that his mistress will also be his eternal care (*cura perennis*) as a result of their literary union. One may wonder what kind of reward that really is for the woman; *cura* can have the implication of guardianship, and when joined with *perennis*, it implies that what the *amator* is offering is not so much eternal devotion as perpetual captivity. This sense of ownership of the woman can only be fully achieved by stripping her of her specificity and humanity. Thus the speaker asks the *puella* to offer herself to him as "fertile material" for his poems.

te mihi materiem felicem in carmina praebe
(19)

Offer yourself to me as fertile material for your songs

Calling the *puella* his *materia* turns the woman into a dehumanized commodity, little more than a vehicle for the *amator* to use in order to display his talents. The use of the

word *felix* in its most literal meaning, as fertile, emphasizes the woman's traditional use in terms of how she may be fruitful or productive for the male. The more figurative sense of *felix* as *fortunate* or *happy* used in the context of comparing the *puella* to heroines in myth victimized by Jupiter becomes highly ironic. None of the mythological heroines chosen by the male narrator as paradigms ends up *felix* at all. On the contrary, they are all helpless victims of male deceit and sexual aggression. More importantly, they are presented exclusively in terms of their *function* as objects of male desire, as fruitful resources to "plough" for the male lover's erotic and literary advantage.

2. Trafficking in Women

Propertius 2.9

Poem 2.9 begins by invoking the powerless position of the elegiac lover who apparently has been supplanted by another man.

iste quod est, ego saepe fui: sed fors et in hora
hoc ipso ciecto carior alter erit (1-2)

What that man is, I have often been: but perhaps even in an hour,
he will be cast out and another will be dearer

The speaker's immediate and explicit concern with his rival suggests that the bond between the lover and his mistress is subordinated to relations between the two male rivals in the poem. In lines 3-18 the speaker in 2.9 turns his attention away from the other man and presents the *exempla* of faithful women ostensibly in order to highlight Cynthia's unfaithfulness. What is intriguing about these lines is not only their more blatant identification of the elegiac lover with epic heroes but also the way in which they envision a complex picture of gender identities for both the *amator* and his mistress. Although the *exemplum* of Penelope seems simply to invoke an ideal of chastity, the image of Penelope "worthy of so many suitors" recalls the wayward Cynthia whose attractiveness to other men at times produces a measure of voyeuristic titillation that fuels the lover's literary and erotic imaginations. Indeed, the speaker's reference to Penelope's many suitors leads directly to images of female trickery and deceit. These images not only echo the speaker's characteristic invectives toward Cynthia, but also his more general references to women as inherently deceitful creatures.

Briseis, the second *exemplum* of female devotion invoked by the speaker, is explicitly described in line 11 as a "*captiva*." The description of Briseis as Achilles' captive here is closely linked to the re-affirmation of the hero's warrior identity. The ideal of a glorious epic death is inextricable from the image of the captive female beloved whose diminutive hands stand in sharp contrast to the male hero's huge body and mighty bones. Throughout his poems, Propertius' male lover expresses an identification with Achilles.

In lines 19-20 the speaker addresses the *puella*, implicitly contrasting the noble Achilles to the impious Cynthia. Although the *amator* launches into his standard invective toward Cynthia and the vilification of women in general, his primary focus

continues to be the presence of the “other man.” Cynthia’s absence, her inaccessibility, gives rise to the *amator*’s fantasies of his mistress enjoying herself with another man. It seems that the speaker evokes the amatory scene not primarily to castigate his beloved but to envision himself as an integral part of that scene. Although the speaker imagines Cynthia and the other man “laughing in their cups,” he also pictures them exchanging “nasty words” about him. It appears that now the speaker becomes the “other man” – the one whose presence not only disrupts the apparent merriment of the two lovers but also brings to the forefront the relationship between the two male rivals in the poem.

Although the speaker describes himself crying by his mistress’ bed, his depiction of male camaraderie and his intense focus on his rival in line 28 closely link male friendship (*amicitia*) and desire (*amor*). The speaker refers to his amatory relationship in the context of describing himself as part of a circle of male companions. Not only does the speaker’s reference to his companions bring into focus the world of male public culture, but it also suggests a contrast between the faithless vows made by women and the pledges among men. The picture of men standing together in solidarity circumscribes the male lover’s bond with his mistress within a network of male social relations.

There is also a suggestion of voyeurism here in the image of the male lover looking at his beloved with his male friends. The shared sorrow of the speaker and his companions serves to underscore the primacy of male friendship and its potential for reinforcing traditional heroic values. The *amator* implicitly identifies with both Achilles and Odysseus, imagining himself as both warrior and wanderer. The speaker pictures himself engaging in the traditional exploits of an epic hero, and in turn he invokes the conventional portrait of women as deceitful liars.

The speaker’s vilification of women serves to affirm the value of *amicitia*. The image of the mistress violating the bonds of public and private trust stands in sharp contrast to the ideal of male friendship invoked by the speaker. In spite of the speaker’s seeming willingness to admit defeat and his characteristic portrayal of himself as unhappy (*miser*) in line 42, his acknowledgement that he yields because the *puella*’s anger is pleasing suggests that the *amator*’s position of subservience is simply part of the elegiac game.

The fact that the speaker depicts Cynthia as both pleasing and an enemy (*inimica*, 44) implies that her resistance to him animates his desire. But the speaker constitutes himself as an enemy primarily in relation to his male rival. The mistress is the medium of exchange between men, offering the possibility of heroic action for the lovers who are seemingly competing for Cynthia’s attentions. Near the end of the poem, despite adopting the characteristically abject pose of the lover, the speaker prays that his rival will turn to stone in the act of love.

The speaker’s invocation of “that man” at line 48 (*ille vir*) recalls the figure of the other man (*iste*) at the beginning of the poem. The implication is that the speaker pictures the other man not only being unable to satisfy the *puella* but also turning into a lifeless statue. One of the most intriguing features of this image is the fact that in elegy it is women who are usually depicted as statues. Propertius suggests that the *amator*’s revenge on his rival not only involves feminizing the other man, but also turning him into an art-object – much as the male lover does with his mistress. In the last four lines of the poem the speaker evokes a bloody scene that links *amor* to images of death and glory. The *amator* imagines himself fighting his rival to the death and again uses a mythological *exemplum* that not only aligns him with the heroic values of epic but also

dramatizes quite forcefully the way in which the mediating *puella* facilitates male reciprocity. While earlier in the poem the *puella*'s nearly fatal illness allowed friends to exchange tears, here "with the mistress in the middle" (51) the speaker imagines himself exchanging deaths with his rival. Propertius implies that what counts most for the lover is not union with his mistress but the demonstration of his superiority in the male arena. Achilles, the speaker's heroic exemplar here and elsewhere, does want to win back Briseis, but that is not what activates his heroism. Rather, it is his desire to wreak vengeance on his rival that satisfies his demand for justice and wins him his glory. The speaker's declaration in line 52 that he would not flee death parallels Achilles' conscious decision to pursue a path of glory. Unlike Achilles, however, the speaker does not conquer his opponent. Rather, the *amator* envisions himself and his rival engaged in a reciprocity that is nearly always absent in the imagined relationship between the lover and his mistress. The exchange of one death for another in the last line reinforces the way in which the elegiac lover defines himself through symmetrical homosocial relations.

Indeed, the mistress is presented as subordinate to an overarching structure that privileges *amicitia* over *amor*. The whole poem is framed by an image of the interlocking identities of the two male rivals. From the very first line, with its syntactic link between "I" (*ego*) and "that man" (*iste*), the poem dramatizes the extent to which the bond between the two men is stronger than that between the male lover and his mistress. The final image of the two men dying together as equals, with the woman "in the middle," casts the *puella* as the third person in the triangle, as a peripheral presence in the fulfillment of masculine, heroic identity.

Tibullus 1.6

Tibullus begins 1.6 by representing the male lover in the conventional role of a feminized, passive figure, enslaved to his domineering, dishonest, and unfaithful mistress, Delia. The speaker at first addresses the god, Amor, and laments how easily he falls prey to his savage power. Indeed, the speaker refers to himself in line 2 as *miser* (miserable, pathetic), the typical characterization of the elegiac lover. He is helpless against the traps Love has set for him. Yet the speaker undermines this ostensibly servile position in a number of ways throughout the poem.

For instance, in line 9, he declares that it is he who has taught Delia to deceive her husband by eluding her guards. This serves to emphasize not only the speaker's intellectual and creative superiority in relation to his mistress, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to introduce the speaker's assertion of dominance within the context of male homosocial relations. As in Propertius 2.9, here the speaker also constitutes his identity through a demonstration of his superiority in the male sphere. Through Delia, the speaker, as we will see more explicitly later, is able to defeat his rival through a host of clever deceptions. The speaker has also given Delia herbs to disguise the bruises from teeth-marks she incurred while they made love. Interestingly, the speaker characterizes their love-making as "mutual" (*mutua venus*, 14). Both the mutuality and the violence of their sex belies the image of the male lover as merely passive. Indeed, the representation of love-making as mutual constitutes in itself a subversion of the male lover's ostensible passivity and powerlessness in relation to his mistress. In addition, the

implications of violence in the speaker's description of sex with his mistress points to his virility and, more specifically, his ability to inflict wounds, much like a soldier on a battlefield. Although the speaker claims in line 10 that he is "crushed by his own art," since Delia has used his methods to be with another man, we shall see that it is precisely his art that allows him to wield invective in so effective a way that he is able to exert power over those who may stand in the way of his desires – whether it be the mistress herself or her husband.

In line 15 the speaker addresses the husband of his mistress directly. The speaker warns him, in very specific terms, about the various ways his wife may deceive him. The speaker is quite transparent in his reasons for issuing these warnings. As he says outright in line 23, he wants the husband of his mistress to trust Delia to his keeping, as the only remedy for her wantonness. For if he were in charge of Delia, the husband need not worry since the speaker plans to take her to the safe sanctuary (i.e. no men allowed) of the Bona Dea. Furthermore, the speaker makes the argument to Delia's husband that keeping her under lock and key only increases her desire for other men. Yet in lines 17–20, the speaker seems to get carried away by the various ways Delia might transgress. The fact that he dwells on her loosened dress, her bared throat, and her finger wet with wine suggests his own sexual arousal and titillation not only by the thought of her with other men but also by her ability to deceive her husband so artfully. Since it was the speaker himself who taught her the arts of deception, then it is reasonable to infer that, rather than being "crushed by his own art," he is enamored with it. Indeed, he goes on to boast to the husband about the deceptions that he himself perpetrated in order to gain access to his mistress. The speaker's declaration in line 28 that it is he who is the *victor* rather than the husband, emphasizes how masculine rivalry is a defining feature of the speaker's identity. We can see a parallel here with Propertius 2.9, in that the speaker focuses as much on besting his rival as he does on his love for Delia.

The speaker asserts his masculine identity in several other ways as well. First, the speaker casts his mistress Delia in the stereotypical role of the sexually unrestrained female who needs to be monitored and controlled. The only question is whether the speaker or the husband guards her. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the mistress is portrayed as an article of commerce between her husband and her lover. The speaker himself refers to Delia as *bona* ("goods") when telling her husband that he should do a better job of guarding her. The implication in referring to Delia at line 33 as *bona* is that it emphasizes that she is simply one of her husband's material goods. This serves not only to objectify the mistress but also gives the speaker the opportunity to challenge the husband's ability to have the control over his *domus* (household) that is expected of any upstanding Roman male citizen. The overall effect of the speaker's advice to and taunting of the husband is twofold. The speaker expresses a kind of solidarity with the husband in that they both have a stake in controlling Delia's wanton sexuality. Yet the speaker also shows that he is able to outwit the husband through his clever strategies. Although earlier in the poem Delia is referred to as "cunning" (*callida*, 6), the speaker makes it clear that whatever cleverness Delia has she learned from him.

In the second half of the poem the speaker's taunting manipulations toward the husband turn to threats and curses directed at Delia herself. In the context of the speaker asserting that he will keep Delia safe, he invokes the goddess Bellona who has prophesied to the speaker that anyone who harms Delia will suffer terrible

consequences. The implicit identification of the male lover with a god associated with war evokes two of the most central metaphors in Roman elegy: the lover as soldier and love as warfare. The violence implicit in these images recalls the speaker's earlier reference to the bruises and teeth-marks on Delia's body. Although Bellona proclaims that no one can harm Delia when she is being guarded by the speaker, Bellona also issues the implicit threat that Delia will be punished if she is unfaithful to him. Despite the fact that it is Bellona who threatens Delia, in lines 55–56 the speaker implies that he will be the one to mete out her punishment. That punishment, we soon learn, can be both physical and literary.

The speaker balances his initial threat to Delia by his ostensible willingness to be the object of violence if he himself strays. Yet this offer to suffer at the hands of his mistress is immediately followed by the speaker's declaration that he would prefer not to strike her. Given the male lover's identification with the goddess Bellona and the bruises he already inflicted on her, his offer to be the object of violence ought not be taken too seriously. Indeed, the poet/lover devotes the rest of his poem to demonstrating his ability to exert power over Delia in a way that is far more effective than mere physical domination. Although he tells her that he wants her to be chaste out of "mutual love," he resorts to threats to ensure his mistress' fidelity. The speaker warns Delia that her infidelity will have dreadful consequences; indeed, he paints a vivid picture of the aging, pathetic courtesan (prostitute) she will become. But, interestingly, the speaker vows that this will only come about if she is "faithful to no one" (77). The image of the aging courtesan is also a reminder of the dependent status of women in Roman society. The speaker's warning constitutes an implicit reminder that, no matter what the status of a woman might be, her fate is ultimately subject to the desires of the men in her life. As Miller remarks in his essay in this volume, Delia's "actual" social status is unknown (cf. James 2003). But in any case it would be a mistake to read the elegists' portrayal of their mistresses as realistic (Wyke 1987). In 1.6 Tibullus depicts Delia as both a wife and a mistress. But one of the ways we may regard the figure of the *vir* (man, husband) in Roman elegy is as a *hostis* (enemy, rival) whom the speaker constructs so that he may operate successfully in the masculine arena.

After the speaker in 1.6 warns Delia about what will happen to her if she is not faithful, he balances his curses with what is essentially a prayer that he and Delia will grow old together and become an example to all lovers. The speaker's use of the hortatory subjunctive ("Let us ...") in the last two lines (vs. 85–6) conveys a magisterial power that belies the speaker's avowedly passive stance. What the speaker clearly wants in the end is for the two lovers (he and Delia) to tell a story for future audiences. While the speaker claims to want only that future lovers will draw inspiration from his and Delia's long fidelity, there are deeper implications here. For, if Delia is faithful to the speaker, she will become a part of the *exemplum* that will ensure her everlasting fame. Indeed, the speaker's manipulative strategies toward his mistress here are all but transparent; he implies that her reputation depends on the continuation of her position as his mistress. The speaker's threats and warnings, on the one hand, function as arguments for Delia's continued faithfulness, but, on the other hand, they also imply a reversal of the elegiac balance of power in which the male lover is subservient to his mistress. The speaker essentially suggests in the poem's final couplet that Delia make herself available to him

as *materia* (subject, theme) for his poetic productions. In Propertian elegy, especially in 1.1, 1.11, and 2.1 (Greene 1998, 2000), we can see how the elegiac mistress is constructed as a vehicle for the poet/lover's literary posterity. The speaker's desire to engage in a poetic practice in which his mistress will not only have a crucial role, but from which she will gain praise *or* condemnation, is the most persuasive argument the speaker can use to get his mistress to be faithful and thus increase the likelihood of his own poetic *fama* as well.

In Tibullus 1.6 the speaker is not as overt as Propertius and Ovid in emphasizing the mistress' role as an instrument for the poet's literary fame. But the fact that the Tibullan speaker envisions his relationship with Delia as an *exemplum* suggests a close association between *amor* and literary artifice, in that amatory relations, predicated on the lover's subservience to his mistress, are themselves subordinate to the speaker's literary concerns. If all he wanted was Delia's fidelity to him, then he would not express his hope that their relationship becomes an *exemplum*. The speaker implies in the end that what matters to him more than anything is his poetic fame. In Ovid *Amores* 1.3, the male lover explicitly asks his mistress to offer herself to him as "fertile material" (*materiem felicem*, 19) for his poems. Referring to his mistress as *materia* emphasizes the woman's use as a vehicle for the poet/lover not only to display his own talents but, ultimately, to ensure his literary posterity. Tibullus, unlike Propertius and Ovid, does not use mythological stories to parallel his amatory situation. But the fact that he ends 1.6 by referring to his hope that his love affair with Delia will become an *exemplum* suggests that he envisions both himself and his mistress as mythical figures in a story that will give him poetic posterity. We may also think about her association with his literary discourse in another way. Containing the sexually and morally wanton mistress within the speaker's poetic *exemplum* subjects the mistress to his rhetorical control, since she would be a theme in the poet's verse. The male lover thus envisions possessing his mistress in both the amatory and literary spheres.

Ovid, amores 2.19 and 3.4

In Poems 2.19 and 3.4, considered to be the counterpart to one another, the *amator* adopts contradictory attitudes toward the practice of husbands' "pimping" for their wives. In 2.19, the speaker makes it clear to the husband of his mistress that in order for him to feel love for her there has to be deception. The speaker emphasizes that what both generates and sustains love is mutual dominance and victimization. He invokes the mythological figures of Danae and Io to make the point that womens' captivity makes them more desirable.

Although the speaker seems to be advocating mutual deception and domination, the examples he chooses to make his point stress the victimization of the female lovers. In the cases of both Danae and Io, male sexual desire is explicitly linked to female captivity and silence. Despite the fact that the speaker encourages his mistress to deceive him and inflict physical pain on him, he can hardly be considered a victim. Although the *amator* refers to his mistress as artful (*versuta*, 9), it is he who ingeniously arranges what roles each of them will play in order to best serve *his* desires. The *amator* not only implies that his sexual arousal depends on the use of deception but also that imagining himself in the role of suppliant at his mistress's

door provokes pleasure rather than pain. The *amator* explicitly links his prostration and suffering with the heightening of his desires and sexual satisfaction. Further, the *amator* makes it clear in line 33 that maintaining amatory relations depends on both deception and a precarious balance of power: "Deception is necessary for any woman, if she wants to rule over her lover for a long time." Although the speaker is giving advice to his mistress about how she may dominate him through deception, the fact that he is fully aware of the deception and is the one manipulating her for his own pleasure makes her domination of him a sham. There is very little doubt about who dominates whom here.

The speaker is equally manipulative toward the husband of his mistress. He makes no pretense about his true motives for wanting the husband (*maritus*) to concern himself with the immorality of allowing his wife to have lovers: "What good to me is an easy, pimping husband? His vice spoils my fun" (57). The speaker openly admits that the only reason he wants his mistress' husband to become more vigilant is so that the excitement of his amatory pursuit will be increased.

In 3.4, the *amator* completely reverses his position toward the husband and admonishes him to loosen his control over his wife so that she may pursue any desires she might have for other men. At first, it seems that the *amator* is encouraging the husband to be more permissive with his wife so that she will be more chaste. The *amator* argues that people naturally rebel against restrictions and desire whatever is forbidden. The *amator*'s credibility here is extremely suspect in light of the fact that, in 2.19, he uses the same argument about "forbidden fruit" to try to get the husband to increase his watch, so that the amatory pursuit would be more challenging.

In 2.19, the narrator unabashedly admits that imagining his mistress held captive by her husband evokes desire in him. And, although the *amator* reverses his position in 3.4 by asking the husband to be more permissive with his wife, the woman is still treated as a commodity of exchange between her lover and her husband – with no agency or autonomy of her own. Moreover, Ovid highlights the way in which the use of women as a tool of exchange between men may be regarded not as a function of culture and sophistication but as an indication of moral degeneracy in the culture. By portraying such exchanges in the context of the sexual "pandering" that goes on between the *amator* and the *maritus*, Ovid is able to reveal the crassness and commercialism that is inherent in using women as objects of exchange. He shows, moreover, how those exchanges contribute not only to the exploitation of women but also to the perpetuation of social values that emphasize perverse forms of commercialism in general. Ovid seems to suggest here that the *amator*'s attempts at "pandering" are part of a highly cultured system of trade and commerce.

In both *Am.* 2.19 and 3.4, Ovid's *amator* tries to "make deals" with the husband of his mistress in order to manipulate how she will be used as an object of the *amator*'s pleasure. Indeed, an important aspect of the transactions between the *amator* and the *maritus* is the way those transactions point up how the subordination of women can be seen as a product of the relationships by which sex and gender are organized in Augustan culture. Ovid's poems show how the asymmetric division of the sexes is played out through their different roles as exchanger and exchanged, and how those roles require control over women's sexuality. Ovid's metaphor for woman as a spirited horse needing to be controlled – whether through permissiveness or discipline – emphasizes the extent

to which control over women's sexuality is a necessary element in establishing men's dominance over women. Women are not only portrayed as merchandise to be exchanged but also as tools in the process of establishing male relationships of mutual interest and solidarity. Although Ovid's *amator* appears to engage the *maritus* in order to have a relationship with a *puella*, it is clear that it is the males who are both partners and beneficiaries in the process of exchange and that women are merely the vehicles of that exchange.

In 3.4, the speaker employs the same mythological *exempla* he uses in 2.19 to try to persuade the husband but for the opposite reason. In 2.19, the narrator uses Io and Danae as examples of how women should be treated. He argues that women are more desirable if they are held in captivity and are rendered incapable of speaking for themselves. In 3.4, the speaker uses the examples of Io and Danae to show how women should not be treated. Although the *amator*'s arguments in 2.19 and 3.4 are contradictory, the mythological *exempla* of Io and Danae in both poems present images of women as most desirable when they have been dehumanized and transformed into "other" beings by male captors.

Despite the *amator*'s apparent concern for virtue in 3.4 we see how false that concern is when he announces to the husband that it is simply unsophisticated to object to adulterous wives:

rusticus est nimium, quem laedit adultera coniunx
(37)

That man is so provincial, who is hurt by an adulterous wife

Through the *amator*'s relationships with the husband of his mistress, Ovid shows how the exchange of women between men is central in the production of culture. Here the *amator* explicitly associates being "cultured" with men's control over women's sexuality. In Augustan society the exchange of women between men is part of a social structure in which the woman was subject either to the powers of the *pater familias* or to another male guardian, whether it be a husband or other male relative. Ovid takes this paradigm further and shows that the exchange of women goes beyond the "acceptable" social practices of passing women from fathers to sons. Moreover, the primacy of male relationships in Augustan culture, implicit in the *amator*'s transactions with the *maritus* of his mistress, suggests also that homosocial bonds between men can be seen as the basis of the socio-cultural order.

Moreover, the *amator* asserts that Rome was, in fact, founded on adulterous practices. The implication is that if the husband wants to be a good Roman, he had better adhere to the crimes that produced Rome in the first place. One of the central myths in the story of the origins of Rome is the rape of the Sabine women. By having his *amator* encourage husbands to "pimp" for their wives and justify it by alluding to a "heroic" tradition that sanctions brutality toward women, Ovid exposes not only how corrupt a practice Roman marriage is but also how easy it is to rationalize such practices. More than that, in alluding to the Sabine myth, Ovid links sexual "pandering" with Rome's imperial conquests and thus suggests a close alliance between male sexual dominance and the assertion of political control and aggression.

Conclusion

The emphasis on power relations between the sexes in Roman elegy brings gender issues to the forefront. The conventional roles of the passive, subservient male lover and the domineering female beloved in Roman elegy have given rise to much scholarly debate, not only about how gender roles are portrayed in elegy but also about what those roles reveal about sex and gender in Roman culture. The gender inversion implicit in the trope of *servitium amoris* ("slavery of love") has generated critical controversy about the extent to which Roman elegists endorse and/or subvert stereotypical notions of gender identity.

Debate about gender in Roman elegy has focused on a number of issues. Chief among these issues has been the question about whether the female beloveds in elegy ought to be regarded as objects of male fantasies of domination or as examples of female subjectivity. Another major issue concerns the ways in which elegists construct images of Roman masculinity through their portrayals of the *amator*. While the avowed position of the *amator* is one of powerlessness in relation to his mistress, we can see numerous ways in which this position is overturned: through mythological *exempla* that portray the *amator* as dominant, through depictions of the *amator* exerting power by means of deception, and through the *amator's* identifications with the heroes of masculine epic. No matter what particular line of argument one wants to take regarding the gender implications of elegy, it is clear that, as a genre, Roman elegy is a site for very complicated negotiations concerning traditional notions of gender, sexuality, and power.

FURTHER READING

There is a growing bibliography on gender and elegy that has developed over the last couple of decades. For articles on gender issues in elegy I would recommend Hallett 1973; Wyke 1987; Sharrock 1991; Gold 1993; Keith 1994; Gamel 1998; Greene 2000; Miller 2001. For book-length studies that focus specifically on gender in Roman elegy, see Greene 1998; Janan 2001; Wyke 2002; James 2003. Chapter 4 in Keith 2008 makes a significant contribution to the topic as well. Ancona and Greene 2005 is the only collection of essays I am aware of that is exclusively devoted to gender issues in Latin love poetry.

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PART VI

Approaches

CHAPTER 23

Lacanian Psychoanalytic Theory and Roman Love Elegy

Micaela Janan

Elegy – like all written lyric, of which it is a sub-genre – is a genre of the book, conditioned by the assemblage of individual poems into a collection, parts into a whole. The tension between “part” and “whole” centrally shapes the experience of reading a poetry collection. When the scholars and poets associated with the great library at Alexandria began assembling individual lyric poems into poetry books in the third century BCE., they posed in the starkest possible terms the question of intertextuality. What do we read with what, and in what order? Each poem can step out of its collection and be read as a singular witness to its own dramatic moment; it can also be construed as a bridge within a narrative, each poem building on the previous links in the chain, and leading to the next. The book as a reading unit both divides and unites the text – and can do so in multiple ways, since the order of presentation does not limit the order of reading. Repeated motifs, themes, words, and metrical patterns shared among poems across the collection motivate non-linear orders of construction that “speak otherwise” within the book (Krevans 1984, “Chapter One: Introduction”).

Psychoanalysis offers a useful perspective on this dilemma, insofar as its founder, Sigmund Freud, articulated a methodology designed to address fragmentary and incomplete knowledge. Psychoanalysis investigates human consciousness conceived (like elegy) as a text with secrets hidden from itself. What is only partially legible to the human subject nonetheless crucially conditions her reading of the data offered by the worlds both within and without herself. This is all the more pertinent to reading elegy since one of the compasses by which readers negotiate the lyric collection’s fragmentation is some notion of the human subject behind the poems’ speaking voice(s) (Janan 1994, ix–xi, 1–9).

The French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan expanded Freud’s model of the subject to include insights from linguistics and literature (as also from philosophy and even

mathematics). Lacan's psychoanalytic thought is thus particularly suited to parsing a complex literary artifact such as elegy. I shall show how his model of subjectivity can address elegy's author, reader, and *dramatis personae* – for example, how his conceptualization of sexual difference illuminates the complexities of gender-inversion that typify elegy (cf. Janan 1994, 2001). Finally, Lacan's mapping of the worlds of experience in which subjectivity is rooted also explicates how socio-historical changes that sparked elegy's inception ensured its swift demise, when brought historically to their logical conclusion. In demonstrating the usefulness of Lacan's thought, I shall draw upon the four poets thought chiefly to define Roman erotic elegy: Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid. Admittedly, Catullus' relationship to the genre is complicated – unlike the other three, he wrote his lyric poetry in a wide variety of meters, not just elegiac couplets. This to the ancients disqualified him formally from being an “elegist”; he is thus missing from Quintilian's canonical list of elegiac poets (*Inst.* 10.1.93). But Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid all bear implicit or explicit witness to Catullus as pioneer of the genre in which they worked. As notional founder of elegy, he must be reckoned among the poets crucial to understanding the genre (Miller 2007, 399–401).

The Subject

Roman love elegy dramatizes a peculiarly vivid speaker, whose subjectivity promises to unify the disparate poems into a more or less coherent narrative of his experiences. The speaker is a young man in love, suffering the vicissitudes of enslavement to desire for his elusive mistress. Although that voice does not evidence itself in every poem of every elegiac collection, it holds forth often and vividly enough to be the chief reference point guiding the reader's negotiation of the collection as a meaningful whole rather than a random collection of separate utterances (Veyne 1988, 1–14).

Would that this voice were a simple one.

The entity after which we grasp to guide us is a polyvalent, self-contradictory figure. A freeborn male citizen, he nonetheless imagines himself the slave of his mistress. A man of sometimes aggressive machismo, he interests himself intensely in women's inner lives, to the point of identifying himself with them (as Catullus implicitly aligns himself with lovelorn mythical heroines like Laodamia, Cat. 68.73–130) or of supplanting his own voice with theirs (as Propertius' fourth book frequently yields perspective and/or narration to its female *dramatis personae*). He alternately rejects and endorses with equal passion traditional societal norms (what the Romans called *mos maiorum*, “the custom of our ancestors”). Take Tibullus' first poem, which opens by rejecting the desire for gain that recruits men to hazardous professions, such as soldiery or overseas commerce. Notwithstanding, as the first book unfolds, we learn Tibullus is himself a soldier (1.3, 1.10) who holds his commander Messalla's military success in high regard (1.7). The *volte face* can be even more abrupt, as when Catullus closes his passionate reverie on Lesbia's devastating attraction by inveighing against the unambitious time (*otium*) necessary to his contemplating such trivia (51).

As readers, we long – in vain – for a more unified subject to pull together the vagaries of the elegiac collection. Critical approaches to these collections often privilege some parts at the expense of others to yield a more smoothly integrated narrative. The expansive

embrace of Catullus', Propertius', Tibullus', and Ovid's poetry is reduced to the "novel" of each poet's love for Lesbia, Cynthia, Delia/Nemesis, and Corinna (e.g., Holzberg 2002, 16–18; cf. Fitzgerald 1995, 26). By contrast, Catullus' excoriating hate poems (e.g., Cat. 28–30, 69, 74), Tibullus' reveries on the attractions of boys (Tib. 1.4), Propertius' antiquarian poems (Prop. 4.1, 2, 4, 9, 10) and Ovid's travelogue to a festival of Juno (*Amores* 3.13) are seen as anomalies splintering the poetry's "real story." They are deemed somehow unelegiac, if not ignored altogether (Veyne 1988, 50–66, esp. 52–53). Psychoanalysis offers a more conceptually rigorous methodology for negotiating the heterogeneity of these oeuvres. The antipodes of readerly collection and dispersion correspond to the autonomous, integrated subject desired as a unifying ideal, and the subject as riven by the Unconscious. But Lacanian psychoanalysis in particular offers a way to parse the desire for wholeness (of a self behind the poems, of narrative) that aligns the erotic with the political, gender with epistemology, self with other – thus keeping in sharp focus the varied subjectivities dramatized by these polyvalent corpora. The fractured subject, and the disjunctive collection he subtends, become not problems to be solved, but insights to be grasped, enabling us better to contextualize and understand both.

The framework for our discussion of elegy begins with three terms fundamental to Lacanian psychoanalysis – the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary (conventionally capitalized to mark them as technical terminology). The Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary divide human experience among them and form an interlocking system (often abbreviated "RSI"). Lacan referred to these three elements of his schema as "registers"; they are intertwined, simultaneous worlds of experience, analogous to registers in music. Briefly, the Real is the realm of pure being without relation or determination, comprising what is forbidden entry into representation. Nothing is either present or lacking in the Real, since the ideas of absence or presence require the prior concepts of division and distinction – concepts native to the Imaginary and especially to the Symbolic, but not to the seamless Real. The Imaginary is so named as the realm of images, not of the imagination – our own shadows cast upon the world. It is a narcissistic and aggressive realm wherein projections of self onto phenomena conjure both affirming reflections of ourselves and doppelgänger rivals threatening to supplant us. The Symbolic is the realm of exchange and sociality, comprising semiotics (paradigmatically language), institutions and protocols. The Real is not reality per se, but the "beyond" of both realms that can only be conceived as amorphous nullity. Yet it is not exterior to the Symbolic and the Imaginary; rather, it marks their point of internal limitation (Miller 2004, 5, 10). In the Symbolic specifically, the Real is perceptible at any point where a supposedly ironclad logic confronts an element incompatible with itself but that the principles of its own rationale cannot refute (Žižek, 1992, 72). Such an impasse is where the Symbolic "visibly *fails* to disambiguate itself" (Copjec 1994, 176–77).

RSI's conceptual scaffolding allows us to theorize the relation of self to community without simply opposing one to the other nor making either the other's shadow. Neither is this an essentialist troika of eternal verities: each term relativizes and recontextualizes the others. No one Imaginary, no one Symbolic obtains, only specific examples that relate to one another in different ways – nor is there any one Real. Because the Real marks the limits of any self-projection and any communal system of norms and codes, it also marks the varied ways in which any given ideological system or personal projection comes up against its own finitude (Miller 2004, 5).

RSI affords a fresh perspective on elegy, one that ties together the seemingly disparate puzzles that the genre offers: its murky origins, its short-lived viability as a Latin lyric form, its narrator's woeful instability in basic categories of the self. Paul Allen Miller has insightfully connected all three puzzles within a comprehensive explanation for the genre as a whole and for the historical paradox it embodies. Though love elegy's brief *floruit* spanned barely 50 years, its long shadow marks the subsequent history of European love poetry (in the sonnet cycle, for example, which flourishes in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, but remains a viable form for, e.g., Rilke's *Duino Elegies* in the early 20th century). Miller ties both resonance and brevity to Rome's fraught transition from republic to empire; elegy is but one symptom of the social and political changes brought about by this transition. The demise of the republic either swept away or radically reshaped traditional ways of attaining and defining Roman aristocratic citizen manhood. For example, as the last century of the Republic saw the most powerful among the elite vie bitterly with one another for supreme control of Rome, the protocols governing the sequential series of public offices known as the *cursus honorum* ("course of honors") were altered or ignored in ways that fostered such ambitions. Marius was able to hold the consulship – an office traditionally occupied for a single one-year term – for five consecutive years (104–100 BCE); Julius Caesar was also consul five times between 59 and 44 (in 45 without a colleague), Pompeius Magnus three times (70–52). These men – all skilled military commanders – represent a trend toward the concentration of power in fewer and fewer hands, via armed conflict. Correspondingly, the arenas for the exercise of democratic process – elections, senatorial debate, legislation – shrink in importance and scope. Military acumen, always a core Roman virtue, now begins to eclipse rhetorical skills as a means of gaining distinction. The familiar landmarks of Roman male identity, and of the world that had to be in order for that identity to exist, are thus unmoored. The gap between the self-images that the Roman subject projects onto the world and receives back from it, and Rome's cultural symbolization systems, widens preternaturally – the gap between the Imaginary and the Symbolic. Out of that gap emerges elegy's schizoid subject, dramatizing fracture and upheaval in the cultural discourses that had previously offered less problematic self-confirmation in a more coherent world.

Perhaps the most consistent and eye-catching of the breakdowns of elegiac subjectivity in the basic categories of self accrues to gender; gender inversion is characteristic of Roman love elegy. In contrast to the values that define Roman masculinity – militarism, autonomy, control over one's emotions and appetites – the elegiac lover regularly portrays himself as a *servus amoris*, "slave of love" (Wyke 2002, 174, with references to previous bibliography). Unable to free himself from self-destructive desire for a woman, paroxysms of hatred, anxiety, desire, fury, jealousy beset him. At best he makes a reluctant soldier, at worst he cynically satirizes all military enterprise. His default in all these areas makes him *mollis*, "effeminate/feminized." So in Catullus 11, the speaker portrays his love for Lesbia as a flower, the quintessential ancient symbol of female virginity, nubility and vulnerability. By contrast, within the closing simile of the poem, he represents her infidelities to him (her *culpa*, "fault") as a plow, an emblem for male sexuality. The plow decapitates the flower in its path out of pure indifference. The emasculated Catullus cannot even earn his tormentor's malice; he is beneath her notice. By contrast, Lesbia's betrayal is seen as monstrous sexual excess – she "embraces three hundred lovers at once" (*simul complexa tenet trecentos*, 11.18) – and is equated with Julius Caesar's

imperial rapacity. Caesar has extended the Roman empire across the Alps and all the way to Britain for no other reason than the same self-absorption implied of Lesbia: the general aims only to create “remembrances of great Caesar.”

The poem’s triangulation of conquest’s dark side with gender inversion and vulnerability brings together themes traced in the first eleven poems of the corpus. These poems sketch in briefest compass a history of Catullus’ affair with Lesbia, from initial flirtation through the flowering of passion, then rejection, then utter repudiation. The later elegists will replay and develop exactly these themes of (outraged, frustrated, or mournful) subjection in their own poetry, embodying them as *servi amoris* (“slaves of love”). All enact yielding up their masculinity to the exact degree they have ceded autonomy and agency to their passion (Copley 1947, Day 1938, Lyne 1979, McCarthy 1998). As Tibullus dances attendance upon Delia’s house door, hoping for admittance, he styles himself her *ianitor* (“door guard”) – lowest slave in the household hierarchy, his life spent chained to his post outdoors in all weathers (cf. 2.4.1–2). Propertius and Ovid are less literal, preferring to elaborate the trope of emasculation implicit in subjection. Like Catullus, Propertius identifies himself with mythic female heroines. He elaborates this posture most extensively in his fourth and last book of elegies, largely eclipsing the male lover-narrator’s voice in favor of feminine narratives in a wide range of voices, from the old procuress Acanthis (4.5) to the blueblood *matrona* Cornelia (4.11). Ironically literal-minded, Ovid translates the social disempowerment of the elegiac lover-narrator into literal impotence: he cannot make love to his mistress (3.7). Good reason for all these poets to regard themselves as the heirs of Catullus (Miller 2007).

But if this is the slippery slope upon which elegy’s unmanned men scramble for purchase, what then of the genre’s women? These are hardly more secure: the same Lesbia who ruthlessly mows down Catullus’ flowering love in poem 11 reappears in poem 51 (uniquely tied to 11 by meter and diction) as a quasi-goddess able to confer more than divine status upon her admirer. Propertius sketches his Cynthia’s wifely devotion to him in one poem (Prop. 1.3), her man-eater openness to all comers two poems later (Prop. 1.5). Juxtaposed to Corinna’s tears as innocent victim of Ovid’s violence (*Amores* 1.7) is the lesson her bawd taught her: to manipulate her lover by weeping on cue (*Amores* 1.8). Most dramatically of all, Tibullus simply names his mistress “Retribution” (*Nemesis*) when he blackens her portrait with unrelenting greed. How do we explain these contradictory portraits of the *puella*, too impossibly good and impossibly bad to be true?

Lacan’s conceptualization of gender offers a way to connect both this female paradox and its corollary, male emasculation, to the late republic’s general epistemological crisis – to the Roman citizen male’s difficulty in answering such questions as “Who am I? How can I be a man, citizen, agent in this world I now inhabit?” For Lacan, both Man and Woman are merely signifying positions. Lacan conceptually opposes “Woman” to “a woman,” or “women.” Whereas “women” in the plurality is an open set (this woman and that one and that other one, without totality or essence), Woman is a fantasy that appears to embody the totality. She closes the set of all women – represents the criteria by which one could unfailingly locate another fully qualified member of the set – by representing Woman as such (Lacan 1975, 14–15; 1998, 9–10; Shepherdson 2000, 108). It is from this aspirational perspective that Lacan calls Woman “one of the names of the Father,” where the Father figures the quintessence of masculine authority and the position of certainty, plenitude and power after which Man vainly grasps (Lacan 1976,

esp. 4–5, 9). Both Woman and the Father are imagined as totalities without lack or exception – they “have it all.” Neither is marked by the lack the subject suffers upon emerging within the Symbolic: the limit imposed upon desire as the price of entering into social systems of exchange (Miller 2004, 123). In Lacan’s terminology, neither Woman nor the Father is “castrated” (a term that throws into relief what lies behind Freud’s idea of “castration anxiety”: the subject’s fear of never attaining the position of power and plenty enjoyed by the Father). As entities without deficiency, both the Father and Woman belong to the Real. They are antithetical to the organization of the Symbolic, pivoting as it does around the ideas of exchange and want (in all senses of the latter word).

Lacan regularly cancelled Woman’s definite article: “La Femme” indicates Woman’s status as an impossible fantasy – an idea he also expressed as “Il n’y a pas La Femme” (“The Woman does not exist”; Lacan 1975, 13, 68; 1998, 7, 72–73.) Yet Her non-existence does not weaken Woman’s power as mirage, anymore than the impossibility of the Father’s omnipotence checks His force either as envied phantasm or punishing super-ego. The conceptual permutations of Woman and the arbitrary, sadistic side of the Father’s law correspond precisely. This side of Woman takes such shapes as elegy’s cold, cruel, manipulative *domina* (herself the precursor of the Fatal Lady of courtly love). She is the *femme fatale*, supreme object of the lover’s desire and paragon of all women, since possessing Her would (in theory) banish lack, make the lover whole, complete and confirm his identity as *the* Man, i.e., the Father. Yet She is devoid of specific properties: reduced to her essence, the unattainable *femme fatale* comprises nothing more than a series of endless, impossible demands (Lacan 1986, 167–84; 1992, 139–54). She thus re-presents the Father – or more precisely, the sinister side of the Father’s relation to law. Interdiction for public benefit – e.g., for security, an orderly society, the greatest good for the greatest number – reveals itself as nothing more than the arbitrary exercise of His will (Janan 2009, 45–47). It thus makes perfect sense that Catullus’ sense of victimization in c. 11 (discussed above) should trace a straight conceptual line from Lesbia to Caesar. Lesbia, like Caesar, acts the capricious Master who wants it all. Herself not bound by any law, she lays upon her *servi amoris* arbitrary and outrageous demands: “embracing three-hundred at once, loving none truly, over and over she crushes their groins” (“simul complexa tenet trecentos / nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium / ilia rumpens,” 11.18–20). The corollary to her broken lovers are the “Caesaris ... monimenta magni” (“monuments ... of great Caesar,” 11.10). Ostensibly remembrances of a patriotic mission to extend the *res publica*’s dominion, these instead bear witness to one man’s ambitions to make himself Rome’s sole authority, its supreme Father.

Tibullus’ abrupt apparent change of *dominae* between his first and second books (a change unique among Roman elegists) offers an even fuller elaboration of the feminine and the paternal. The unceremonious switch to a new name and characterization has often been read as dramatizing the positive and negative of the same woman (Bright 1978, 99–123, esp. 117–119). But the way in which Tibullus positions these two starkly different female portraits with respect to equally disparate figures of masculine authority points even more strongly to the articulation of a fantasy about Woman (*sous rature*, and not) and the Father.

In his first book, Tibullus imagines a quasi-marital relationship with Delia. She will grieve over his absence or death (Tib. 1.1.57–68, 1.3.9–32), preside over his fantasy of

being a peaceful farmer by welcoming his aristocratic patron Messalla to the country retreat Tibullus imagines in some nebulous future (Tib. 1.5.21–34; Miller 2004, 126–127). Tibullus blames his separations from Delia on others: the *vir* (“companion/husband”) who sets a guard over her (*custodes*, 1.2.15; cf. 41–42), the *lena* (“bawd”) who persuades her to accommodate another (richer) lover (1.5.47–48). But Delia disappears without explanation after Book I, and Nemesis reigns in Book II – the elegiac *puella* stripped down to nothing but insatiable demand. She coolly decamps for the country villa of a rich *libertinus* (“freedman”); his personal attraction has not lured her from Rome, but the wealth that his extensive landholdings promise (2.3.59–62). With her hands out to receive, she badgers Tibullus constantly for reward (2.4.14). He is ready to do anything to satisfy her hunger – commit sacrilege by stealing from the gods’ own altars, sell his family home at auction, even die. He would drink an encyclopedic mix of poisons to please her (2.4.55–60).

But the extravagant nature of the last offer prompts the reader to ask, “Why should it please her? Stealing from the gods or selling your patrimony would yield money to give her, but your death affords her no material profit.” The offer can only measure Tibullus’ estimation of Nemesis’ limitless demand: she must “have it all” – *all* his substance, even his own life. Nemesis appears to be her own agent, with neither *vir* nor *lena* to inspire her demands. In the very last poem, Tibullus desperately conjures a human corruptor, the so-called *lena* Phryne. But the evidence of the poem assigns cruelty less clearly: “the procuress is *killing* me, my girl is *goodhearted*” (“*lena nocet nobis, ipsa puella bona est,*” 2.6.44) is a Manichaean division all the less plausible for the fact that we have previously heard nothing *bonum* about Nemesis. None of the actions Tibullus ascribes to Phryne – carrying Nemesis’ messages to others concealed on her person; denying her mistress is home, or available, when Tibullus can hear Nemesis’ voice – is incompatible with the actions of a slave acting upon instruction, even if Nemesis cannot be bothered to uphold her own fiction (2.6.44–50).

Tellingly, it is Delia Tibullus associates with the benevolent side of the Father in the shape of Messalla; having earned material reward and reputation for his military accomplishments, Messalla blesses Tibullus with some of the overflow. As Miller observes, Messalla is a quasi-divine Father who presides over an earthly paradise in the shape of the dreamed-of farm – from which Tibullus is effectively banished: he can imagine Delia and Messalla in this paradise, but not himself (Miller 2004, 126).

Nemesis’ relation to the Father and to the country idyll is quite different. Acting the rapacious, sadistic side of the Father, she emasculates all other males. Her constant demands for material wealth nearly rob Tibullus of human status – he offers to plow fields for her, fulfilling a slave’s office and on a footing with the plough-animal (2.3.79–80). And while Tibullus’s rival may have a rich country estate, his estate’s cash value is the *only* reason Nemesis keeps his company. No dream of a country idyll here: a *nouveau riche* freedman is still a freedman, a false pretender to the Father’s position of authority and status. The second book projects the same pattern of degradation onto the divine plane: Apollo, the divine embodiment of rationality and providence, suffers enslavement and humiliation because of his love for Admetus (2.3.11–30). Even the god’s power over poetry comes to naught: the verse he inspires cannot help Tibullus satisfy Nemesis (2.3.11–14). Among Tibullus’ Olympians, only Venus enjoys unchecked power; she exercises it solely to inspire demand in her female worshippers (2.4.25–26).

Conversely, elegy's passion-play sometimes reverses the gendered dynamic sketched above and anxiously displaces the erosion of identity from the lover-narrator onto the mistress. This is evident in the trope whereby he catalogues his mistress' nonpareil attractions, the very siren beauties that deprive him of sovereignty over himself. Yet the way the poet plays upon the double meaning of corpus as "body" and as "poetic oeuvre," declaring that desire for his mistress' body inspires him to write elegiac poetry, blurs the line between flesh and verse. The elegist invites his readers to doubt the existence of any such corporeal Muse and to see the female flesh animated within his verses as entirely his own invention, an index of personal *ingenium*. Propertius is the most explicit in this regard:

sive illam Cois fulgentem incedere cogis,
 hac totum e Coa veste volumen erit;
 seu vidi ad frontem sparsos errare capillos,
 gaudet laudatis ire superba comis;
 sive lyrae carmen digitis percussit eburnis,
 miramur, facilis ut premat arte manus;
 seu cum poscentis somnum declinat ocellos,
 invenio causas mille poeta novas;
 seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu,
 tum vero longas condimus Iliadas;
 seu quidquid fecit sive est quodcumque locuta,
 maxima de nihilo nascitur historia.

(Prop. 2.1.5–16)

If you make her walk shining in Coan silk, there will be a whole book made from Coan silk; or if I see disheveled locks stray across her forehead, she, proud, will rejoice to go forth with lauded locks; if she plucks a song from the lyre with her ivory fingers, I marvel at her hand's effortless art; if her eyes flutter with fatigue, I, her poet, discover the cause for a thousand new verses. But if she wrestles with me naked, her shift torn off, then truly I have the foundation for long *Iliads*. Whatever she does or whatever she says, a great narrative is born from nothing.

His mistress' dress will be the substance of his next poetry book, while her hands skilled at song become ivory, a substance for *objets d'art*. "If you make her walk" implies she has no independent existence, as does the phrase "a narrative will be born from nothing." Cynthia is nothing but her poet's creation (Wyke 2002, 150–151) and her beauties an index of his *ingenium* – to that degree an affirmation of his mastery and a claim to masculinity.

The paradoxical maneuver by which the poet simultaneously avows himself as his mistress' thrall and her creator amounts to what Lacan would call an Imaginary stratagem to secure identity. Woman (the mistress) becomes for Man (the lover-narrator) a collection of fetishized objects (breast, hair, lips, skin, etc.). These objects both figure castration for him (as division of the body) and deny it (insofar as he reads her body as his *complement*, his missing "other half" (Lacan 1966, 823, 825; 1977, 320, 322–23). In this case, the elegiac mistress completes the lover's identity as poet, while lack (as castration) is banished to her side of the opposition. Woman then becomes the

subordinated guarantor of Man's identity qua Man, as the oppositional term in a (near-) binarism (Lacan 1966, 499–501; 1977, 151–52). Woman thus guarantees conceptual unity and wholeness to Man's side, underwriting his identity.

Of course, such a delusional stratagem is ultimately doomed to failure. Propertius' implicit claim to puissance by virtue of his poetic genius shipwrecks upon the irregular subject-matter of that poetry. He trains his genius upon cataloguing a woman's body parts, while celebrating leisure, pleasure, and withdrawal into private life. All this is at odds with the devotion to business, self-control, self-denial, and public life at the heart of traditional Roman masculinity (Wyke 2002, 174). Propertius' mastery is that of the eunuch – sway over the seraglio.

This despairing portrait of the lover-narrator's ultimate impotence may itself be clarity – an apocalypse wrought by the earth shifting beneath the elegiac subject's feet. Woman is the perspective from which not only Woman's totality, but all totality – any attempt to explain phenomena on the basis of a single logical principle – is rejected as pure fantasy. She is *hors-sens*, “outside meaning/sense” – i.e., She views meaning-making systems skeptically, seeing the private interests behind the myths of universal benefit upon which they rest. As such, Woman signifies the antithesis of masculine certitude, based on identification with order, law – with rule-based systems conceptually centered on the Father's authority, His “laying down the law.” The feminine is for Lacan an attitude toward knowledge and procedure, rather than a category defined strictly by gender (J.-A. Miller 1984; Ragland-Sullivan 1991). The persistent self-dramatization of the lover-narrator as feminized aligns him with the gender position that figures trenchant skepticism toward social protocols, cultural institutions and their self-justifying narratives. When Propertius most fully develops women's voices in his Book IV, he even turns feminine skepticism upon the genre of elegy itself. Cynthia's *lena* Acanthis counsels unsentimental self-interest, urging her charge to prefer a rich lover to a poor poet's offers of loyalty and poetry (Prop. 4.5.53–58). Though the eavesdropping Propertius is indignant, his poem demonstrates the wisdom of Acanthis' advice. *Lenae* were themselves often former prostitutes – i.e., in the same position as Cynthia. Yet Acanthis is in old age dependent on Cynthia, and dies abandoned, destitute, ill (as Propertius gleefully informs us). Acanthis lives out wisdom of her own advice. This is what a woman without material resources can expect when her physical attractions deteriorate. Why, then, should Cynthia trust Propertius' proffer of loyalty to, and beyond, death in lieu of ready cash? Driving the knife even further into his genre's conceits and the way they serve masculine interests, he consigns Cynthia to death – and brings her back – two poems later (Prop. 4.7). Her ghost energetically declares a counter-narrative also contradicting his own poetic conceits. Though he has tirelessly rung the changes on Cynthia's alleged faithlessness – always lured by another man's riches – her ghost declares it was *he* who was faithless, not she (Prop. 4.7.53–54, 70). The fact he has already found another woman, Chloris, lends credence to this allegation. Chloris might even have caught his eye before Cynthia's death, since Cynthia berates Propertius for neglecting her funeral rites and ascribes her demise to poison, administered (she implies) at Chloris' behest (4.7.23–34, 39–48, 71–2; Cf. Janan 2001, 85–113).

Ovid logically extrapolates this self-consuming skepticism of elegy. He is regularly regarded as the poet who kills elegy by cynically exploiting its conventions, thus casting the pall of parody over future use of the tropes. However, Miller argues that

Ovid's ironic elegiac style is no mere authorial whim; rather, Ovid's peculiar stance toward elegiac protocols reflects historical changes in subjectivity. The traumatic events of the civil war were fresh memories for Ovid's elegiac predecessors, and the Augustan regime's efforts toward ideological control over their interpretation new and tentative. By contrast, Ovid is two generations removed from Catullus, about one from Tibullus and Propertius. Civil war is a distant memory for him, and Augustan ideological control now firmly cemented. A new configuration of RSI obtains in Ovid's day; the rigid subordination of private life to public life that had structured the definition of masculine *virtus* in the Republic has yielded to Balkanization and equalization of both realms. The emperor's predominance in Rome's civic institutions shrank opportunities for the average citizen male's agency in the public sphere, while encouraging greater investment in private life (hence Augustus' emphasis on Roman citizen males' duty to marry and raise families). New modes of defining oneself as a Roman citizen have opened up, modes centered on the private sphere; the public sphere belongs to the emperor and his family. The gap between Imaginary and Symbolic identifications breached in the very early principate has thus closed again, yielding a new configuration of subjectivity, one centered upon self as interiority (Miller 2004, 2–3, 161, 216–24).

Ovid reflects this new reality insofar as he seems to embrace the very social changes, the new configuration of the law anchored in the *princeps*, that his predecessors viewed with mordant skepticism. And yet by so doing, he even more mercilessly exposes the internal contradictions of Augustan ideology and the subjectivity to which it gives rise. Ovid's narcissistic lover bent on chasing his private pleasures is the logical consequence of imperial control over the public sphere. The Ovidian lover energetically pursues fulfillment in the *Lebensraum* left him (Miller 2004, 166, 230; cf. Barton 1994). This scope the emperor himself opened up (literally and figuratively) by, e.g., building or refurbishing the public spaces intended as edifying monuments to Augustus, his family, and the virtues his regime sought to foster in Romans (such as *pietas*, "sense of duty"). When in the *Ars Amatoria* Ovid shifts his lover-narrator's focus slightly from documenting his own love affairs to advising others how to conduct theirs, he praises these very spaces as "happy hunting grounds" for beauties. He lauds specifically the porticoes of Augustus' wife Livia and his sister Octavia as good places to meet women – not to mention the Palatine portico of the Danaids (*Ars* 1.69–74). Driven by their sense of duty to their father, those exemplarily obedient mythic daughters killed their husbands; Ovid's stark tableau of the women preparing death for their hapless cousin-bridegrooms while their father stands by, sword drawn, underlines the contradictions internal to the ethics Augustus promoted. Even in Ovid's last poems, written after Augustus exiled him to Tomis (whence one might have expected a more chastened view), the Temple of Jupiter receives a plaudit especially stinging to the emperor, since Ovid's praise puns on the emperor's name:

quis locus est templis *augustior*? haec quoque vitet,
 in culpam siqua est ingeniosa suam,
 cum steterit Iovis aede, Iovis succurret in aede
 quam multas matres fecerit ille deus.

(*Tristia* 2.287–90)

What place is more *reverend* than temples? Yet even these a woman must avoid, if she is canny about not straying. When she stands in Jove's temple, it will occur to her how many women Jove made mothers.

The verses prompt a double reading of *augustior* ("more reverend") as "more connected to Augustus." After all, the emperor's own *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (*The Achievements of the Deified Augustus*) boasts of the numerous temples he had restored or caused to be built. The precinct of the Temple of Jove specifically had been restored in the 20s BCE. Moreover, Augustus, too, had caused women to become mothers with marital legislation aimed at encouraging maternity (and parenthood generally). Yet the *Amores* and *Tristia* both align Augustus' legislative and architectural efforts at fostering "family values" with the more direct methods of Jupiter the rapist (Edwards 1996: 24) – gallingly, but unassailably, since Ovid merely extrapolates from the logic of divine connection and paternal-monarchic authority upon which Augustan ideology itself depended (Miller 2004, 230–33).

Ovid makes it clear, however, that Augustus matters not in himself (despite the *princeps*' claims of an extraordinary superhumanity rooted in immortal ancestry), only as notional anchor of the now radically-revised Roman Symbolic. Augustus figures in Ovidian elegy as both logically necessary and purely structural: his position constitutes the "one" who defines "what one does not do." Ovid's cheeky lover-flâneur requires such an eye over-seeing all acts, for whom one performs (or breaches) social protocols. Augustus merely occupies the "third position that by imposing the law makes possible the delights of transgressing it" (Miller 2004, 171).

Still, *Amores* 2.7 and 2.8 indicate how purely contingent and tenuous is the *princeps*' claim upon the position of surveilleur-judge (or for that matter, anyone else's Imaginary claim upon identity) by replacing him with the least likely candidate: Corinna, erstwhile catalyst for Ovid's transgressions. As often in the *Amores*, these two poems form a contradictory diptych. In 2.7, Ovid defends himself against Corinna's suspicion that he has slept with her maid Cypassis. He scorns the accusation as absurd: who would want to embrace a slave's body, disfigured by signs of her own servitude (e.g., scars from whipping, 2.7.21–22)? Yet Roman slave-owners enjoyed untrammelled access to their slaves, who were regarded as mere property; masters were not only allowed, but often encouraged, to take full sexual advantage of that fact. (Propertius fondly remembers his own initiation into sex by the slave Lycinna [Prop. 3.15.3–6], while Horace characteristically strips such commerce of sentimentality: he recommends sex with either female or male slaves in order to satisfy the urge without offending public morals [*Satires* 1.2.116–18]). In 2.8, Ovid blandly and breathtakingly reverses position, as he alternately flatters, cajoles, and threatens Cypassis into having sex with him – according to him, *more* sex. If she refuses, he will tell Corinna they have been lovers. But as John Henderson points out, we cannot get outside Ovid's viewpoint – we have no independent proof he *has* slept with Cypassis: "The point is that he might well be presumed to have, and can use that pre-justified prejudice as leverage, and try to turn it into fact" (Henderson 2009).

These two poems underline once more the need to have a watchful (and potentially disapproving) eye oversee the lover-narrator's amorous activities. But this time Corinna, the erstwhile occasion and other object of such oversight, becomes the surveilling subject. Her promotion shows elegy fundamentally to proceed, not from historical fact (a

“real love story”), but from an iterable structure – the amatory triangle of lover, beloved, blocking third figure (whether the last be a *dramatis persona* or something less tangible – marriage laws, magic, or the disapproval of one’s friends). A Jezebel drafted as judge shows that any of the three positions may be occupied by any body. Elegy’s lover, beloved, and what comes between the two, incarnate no essential qualities. Rather, bodies shift among all these positions vertiginously. Lacan’s elaborations on such interchangeability of subject position and its unexpected consequences can help us elucidate the darkly perverse logic of the Cypassis poems (Lacan 1957).

For example, if we pay attention to the fundamental ambiguity of the poems on whether Ovid has actually slept with Cypassis, Corinna’s newfound panoptical authority may bring about the very consequences she fears. Stung by jealousy, Corinna could only punish Cypassis; she cannot offer serious physical insult to a freeborn Roman male. Her possible vengeance against Cypassis, even for a false report from Ovid, is a strong lever with which Ovid can bend Cypassis to his will. And if Sharon James is correct to read the elegiac mistress’ jealousies as strategically feigned, then Corinna’s rage goes doubly wide of the mark. For James, whenever the puella accuses her lover of straying in his affections, she can be read as merely acting on the advice of her *lena* (as recorded in, e.g., *Amores* 1.8.79–80, while Prop. 2.20 implicitly confirms the efficacy of the stragem; cf. James 2003, 55–68). Pretended fits of jealousy puff the lover’s ego (thus securing him more firmly to his mistress’ side); his wrongs of any kind, real or alleged, enable her to extract a mollifying gift from him (*Ars* 2.169–172). Elegiac jealousy is economic policy. But if that was Corinna’s object here, the two poems record a signal backfire: rather than her gaining a possession from Ovid, Ovid violates one of hers. Lacan formulated this principle as “the sender always gets his own message back in inverted form” (Lacan 1966, 41; 2006, 30) – an inversion equally evident in the lover’s reaction to the *princeps*’ civic reformation and his mistress’ jealousy. In both cases the lover subverts prohibition by perversely mirroring its fundamental assumptions. Corinna’s angry message, “My maid is off-limits!” is exactly what makes it possible for Ovid to rape Cypassis.

The portrait that *Amores* 2.8 draws of the lover’s cunning – and even more, of his delight in exercising it – supports this reading of *Amores* 2.7 as blackmail rather than simple dissimulation. The lover subverted oversight by taking advantage of his position as (in Lacan’s phrase) “the one who saw without being seen.” *Amores* 2.8’s retrospective rereading of 2.7 makes it clear that Corinna accused Ovid with Cypassis present. When Corinna remonstrated with him, he saw that she actually saw nothing. Had she had been certain he’d had sex with Cypassis, she would have settled the business more roughly: beaten Cypassis, sold her, even had her killed – anything forcibly to block her lover’s access to her maid. But ignorance kept Corinna from throwing away a valuable slave. Moreover, when Cypassis did not dare defend herself, he saw both the maid’s fear of her mistress and Cypassis’ ignorance of his watching for such signs. His observations grant him the necessary leverage to have sex with Cypassis (or to have it again): now he knows he can blackmail the thoroughly intimidated slave.

However, his narcissistic preening in his own gamesmanship makes the true object of his deception less than clear. Was the point to enjoy Cypassis, or to congratulate himself on being able to do so? *Amores* 2.8 addresses Cypassis directly, and revels, not in the delights of the sex he (allegedly) had with her, but in his skill at persuading Corinna she

was wrong. He was convincing (he says) because he preserved his own *sangfroid*. By contrast, he cruelly twits Cypassis for blushing and thus fueling Corinna's suspicions – suspicions that underpin Ovid's threats against Cypassis and thus the maid's undoing. The diabolical logic of the poem is that the lover both demonstrates and profits from the functional blindness of Corinna as putative "all-seeing eye" – an eye that nonetheless cannot see how its own strictures enable the very violations it seeks to quash. Tellingly, nothing Ovid reports of Cypassis unambiguously confirms his version of events: Cypassis' blushing and trembling in her mistress' presence are wholly reconcilable to sheer terror at her mistress' temper rather than a guilty conscience. Cornered by Ovid, she can only shake her head in a refusal made powerless by her position. "Check" and "checkmate" belong to *puella* and lover; the slave's part is to pay the consequences.

The particularly cynical disenchantment of these two elegies centered on slave-rape returns us explicitly to the contradictions of elegy's *servitium amoris* ("love slavery") with which we began: the genre revolves about a freeborn, upper-crust Roman citizen male who nonetheless portrays himself as enslaved, emasculated and made deaf to his own class protocols by his mistress' siren call. *Amores* 2.7/2.8 push the logical premises of that self-dramatization to their nauseating conclusions, elucidating what remains suppressed and occluded within the posture. A lover so lost to self-governance, so privately self-interested, mirrors the mistress-as-capricious-Master in his narcissism. Though the elegiac lover regularly laments his mistress' abusive demands, Ovid depicts that narcissism as having properly belonged to the lover all the time. Ovid's self-dramatized manipulation of Corinna and Cypassis affords another perspective on the elegiac lover-narrator's subtler management of his audience, the way the narrator of elegy bids for our sympathy and understanding by persuading us to ignore or discount other points of view, other interests (the *puella*'s, for example – she who almost never gets to speak; Fitzgerald 1995, 13–16). Just as the lover-narrator reveals what it really means to be the *princeps* – the authority that becomes the very ground for its own transgression – so Cypassis reveals what it means to be the lover – the transgressor who asks us to authorize his silencing of others. In the face of Cypassis' speechless refusals, he threatens to tell Corinna her slave *did* sleep with him, in lurid detail (2.8.25–28). The most potent weapon the lover-narrator wields against Cypassis is to be the only one whose speech counts.

This particularly jarring clash between elegy's artificial world, and the *facta bruta* of real-world domination throws into relief the way Ovid's elegiac poetry fundamentally shifts the lover-narrator's subject position. Subversion (gleeful or bitter) has given way to ironic self-styling – the logical reflection of increasing political absolutism (Miller 2004, 211–12). The more rigid and comprehensive the political-social norms, the smaller and more brittle the space the lover-narrator can occupy, until nothing is left but this amatory Noh-theater – what Lacan, borrowing from Aristotle, calls the operation of the *automaton*, the hidden insistence of the Symbolic network of signifiers in the subject's apparently free-willed behavior. The dramatized cruelty of 2.7/2.8 is the indifference of a compulsion to act out elegy's conventions ironically, as a self-enclosed sign system performed without end (in both senses of that word: "object" and "terminus"). Ultimately, the only space elegy can occupy is to be reduced to its own essence, as in Ovid's exilic poetry: perpetual, futile longing for the distant beloved who quintessentially embodies inaccessible cruelty – Rome. Little wonder that neither elegy, nor Ovid, survive their transplantation to frozen Tomis.

Lacan is but one of the critical methodologies that informs contemporary perspectives on elegy, but he offers the power to elucidate comprehensively from within a single conceptual apparatus the genre's historical, social, and literary significance both in relation to its contemporary readers and to its *Nachleben*. In particular, when Lacan reconceives Man and Woman not as pure biological difference, but as asymmetrical, interdependent vantages on the world, he aligns elegy's erotic content with the larger epistemological issues it draws in its train (e.g., what at the core does it mean to be male or female, free or thrall, citizen or stranger, when history sweeps to ruin known markers of all these?). As classicists increasingly abandon formalist criticism, endeavoring to engage the very specific material, social, and historical aspects of ancient literature, the usefulness of Lacanian psychoanalysis will almost certainly grow and deepen in coming years.

FURTHER READING

Psychoanalytic studies of Roman literature are few in relation to publications in the field as a whole.

Still scarcer are Lacanian approaches; Lacanian attentions to Roman love elegy specifically, an even smaller subset. Yet classical scholars' interest in viewing Rome through the perspectives that Freud and Lacan offer is growing (as exemplified by the groundbreaking work of Eleanor Leach, Erik Gunderson, Ellen O'Gorman, James Porter, and Christopher Spelman – to name only a few not already mentioned). The reader interested in examining further the interventions of psychoanalytic methodology into Latin poetry will profit from Ellen Oliensis' thoughtful overview of the subject and from her bibliography. Also helpful is the brief conspectus of Lacanian classical scholarship (with bibliography) that introduces James I. Porter's and Mark Buchan's co-edited special issue of *Helios*.

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CHAPTER 24

Intertextuality in Roman Elegy

Donncha O'Rourke

1. Ancient and Modern Intertextual Readers

SVRDA · SIT · ORANTI · TVA · IANVA · LAXA · FERENTI
AVDIAT · EXCLVSI · VERBA · RECEPTVS · [*a*]MAN[*s*]
IANITOR · AD · DANTIS · VIGILET · SI · PVLSAT · INANIS
SVRDVS · IN · OBDVCTAM · SOMNIET · VSQV[*e*] · SERAM

Deaf be your door to the beseecher, wide open to the giver,
let the lover received hear the words of the lover locked out.
Let the doorman keep watch for givers; if the empty-handed knocks,
deafly he'll dream on against the bolt drawn across.

So reads a graffito (*CIL* 4.1893–4; all translations are as original as intertextuality permits) inscribed on the wall of a provincial Roman basilica on or before 24 August, 79 CE. The circumstances of preservation may have been unique, but the phenomenon preserved was widespread (see Cooley and Cooley 2004: 220–1 on Pompeian literary graffiti, and Dimundo 2000: 172 on this example). The first couplet quotes Ovid, *Amores* 1.8.77–8, the second (apparently in the same hand) Propertius 4.5.47–8. Today's readers agree that the lines are “closely connected” (Hutchinson 2006 *ad loc.*) in ways that go beyond their mutual participation in the conventional erotico-comedic (or real-life?) scenario of a *lena* (bawd) advising her protégée (McKeown 1989: 198–200 and *ad loc.*; Myers 1996; James 2003). In addition to their similarities of content (the lines give identical advice) and context (both elegies quote and curse the *lena*: 1.8.113–4; 4.5.1–4), the couplets recall each other in their construction (the hexameters contrast solvent and insolvent lovers/clients, the pentameters switch to an indoor perspective)

and diction (*surda* and *surdus* fall in the same *sedes*, as do the participial endings of *oranti* and *dantis*, where an orthographical variant in the Propertian line amplifies the homophony). From a strictly intertextual perspective, it is irrelevant that chronological priority cannot be established with certainty, since what matters is the conversation between texts, as overheard by the reader (and described as “intertextuality”), not the imitation of texts, as overseen by poets (and constructed as “allusion”). However much *Amores* 1.8 casts Propertius’ *mores* as archaic (so K. Morgan 1977: 59–68), by an equal and opposite reaction Propertius’ vindictiveness (he harbours his grudge after the *lena*’s death) trumps Ovid’s moderation (*uix se continere manus | quin...*, “with difficulty my hands restrained themselves from...,” 110–11) with an exaggerative pose that itself is not un-Ovidian. Without the trammels of priority, the elegies tell a mutually-informing story of Propertian excess and Ovidian restraint consistent with (or mediated by?) a recent reading of elegiac ethics (R. K. Gibson 2007).

Historicising instincts may nevertheless prompt classicists, even those who read intertextually, to consider whether Ovid was alluding to Propertius (perhaps after his alleged second edition of the *Amores*), or vice versa. The lines inscribed on the Pompeian basilica may be found to gesture towards one view of priority, less by their sequence than by the lines chosen for comparison. The Ovidian hexameter neatens its Propertian counterpart and adventurously transfers the deafness from *ianitor* to *ianua* (a hypallage less absurd after the personified door of Propertius 1.16). In the pentameter, *audiat* replaces *surdus* to mark the introduction of a new perspective, that of the *receptus amans*. The participle at the end of the pentameter, a feature usually avoided by the elegists, is not a snag in the Ovidian refinement, but rather a conspicuous allusion to the *receptus amans* who occurs uniquely at Propertius 2.14.28 and gloats, precisely, that “others were knocking in vain and calling my *domina*” (v. 21): Ovid’s mercenary *lena* thus reveals that the *amans* of Propertius 2.14 *bought* his entry.

Far from arbitrary, then, the Pompeian reader’s juxtaposition invites, or steps into, a conversation more engaging than the small-talk exchanged over an erotic convention. It may even be a response to an invitation from the Ovidian couplet to read intertextually: the substitution of hearing (*audiat...uerba*) for deafness in the Ovidian pentameter could be taken to signpost these acts of reception (cf. *receptus*), just as the entire speech of Ovid’s *lena* has been overheard, literally by Ovid the *amator* (“chance made me witness [*testem*] to her speech,” 21) and metaliterarily by Ovid the alluding poet (O’Neill 1999). On this view, *Amores* 1.8 constructs Propertius 4.5 as a more archaic, less refined, and shorter experiment on the same theme, and so anticipates on a less ambitious scale Ovid’s later construction of the *Aeneid* as a “hesitant precursor” of the *Metamorphoses* (Hinds 1998, 104–22, at 106). Ovid’s restrained antipathy towards a *lena* who is still alive may even tempt the reader to take Propertius’ excessive abuse of a *lena* who is dead as the epigonal text. The concession to allusion, then, need not surrender the liberties contingent on intertextual reading. Rather, the most stimulating readings of Latin poetry in recent years have been those that read Latin allusion *intertextually*.

Poststructuralist readings of Latin literature have been occupied with many of the issues adumbrated above, such as “intentionality,” or how intertexts become allusions (Conte 1986: 23–99; Fowler 1997) even within a conventional framework (Hinds 1998: 17–51), whether activated by diction or other kinds of marked language (Wills 1996), how imitative texts offer rereadings of the works imitated (Martindale 1993: 35–54),

how readers (and alluding poets) harness the two-way traffic between “source” and “target” texts to leave “traces” of one text in another (Barchiesi 1984; Fowler 1997: 18–28) or to create their own tendentious literary histories, even to the point of anachronistic flips in priority (Hinds 1998: 52–144), and how “self-reflexive annotation” (a.k.a. the “Alexandrian footnote”) signposts these intertextual stunts (Conte 1986: 57–69; Hinds 1998: 1–16; Miller 1993). The Pompeian graffito, having anticipated the dynamics of intertextual reading almost two millennia *avant la lettre*, might be described as a freeze-frame of quotidian intertextual competence, a concrete example of the “ideal reader” presupposed or constructed by the text as theorised by modern critics (Conte 1994: xx–xxii, 133–8). In contemplating the intertextual self-consciousness of Latin elegy, we should remember that there was intensive discussion of imitation also in antiquity (Russell 1979): one such theorist was Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a resident in contemporary Rome whose analogies between literary *mimesis* and erotic voyeurism, though directed (in what survives) at prose-writers, make for suggestive comparison with, for example, Propertius’ gazing at Gallus’ amour (and *Amores*) in 1.10 (see further Hunter 2009: 107–27; Whitmarsh 2001: 71–5).

The focus of this chapter will be elegy’s literary intertexts, but it should be remembered that elegy also converses with, *inter alia*, socio-political ideologies, historical events and personages, monuments and other visual “texts.” In this sense, all the material in this volume might be said to deal with elegy’s intertexts. However, the inclusion of this chapter among “approaches” to Latin love-elegy reminds us that, in the final analysis, intertextual events are not already present within the text, but imposed on it by a reader (who may also be the poet). Thus, in an intertextual universe, the so-called “intentional fallacy” gives way to a celebration of endless possibilities, creating parity between poet and reader with allusions coming into existence only when a poem triggers a sympathetic vibration in both the poet’s and reader’s memories of the literary tradition (Conte 1986: 32–9). By necessity of the Barthesian imperative that meaning is created at the point of reception, to postulate an allusion is to (re)construct what the (re)constructed author intended (Hinds 1998: 49). The empirical “ideal” reader and “alluding” poet remain useful thinking-tools (thus, the Pompeian scribe spotted Ovid’s allusion to Propertius), provided it is recognised that the final responsibility for any interpretation lies with its proponent and is contingent on his or her cultural horizons and interestedness. This consideration is especially urgent in the case of elegy, which mobilises such strong personal intertexts as politics, feminism, sexuality, and psychoanalysis (see Kennedy 1993). By extension, the readings proposed here are intertextual with, for example, Conte, Hinds, and Fowler (as is this point with Martindale 1993: 53–4). Countless ancient literary and other intertexts may no longer be directly available to us, yet when we inject the plaster of the present into the cavities of the ghosts of the past, we cannot but make casts of people who lived, loved, and read as we do.

2. Generic Ascent

Directly beneath the “ancient twenty-first century” graffito discussed above is inscribed (possibly in a different hand) another Ovidian couplet (*CIL* 4.1895), *Ars.* 1.475–6 (“quid magis est saxo durum, quid mollius unda? | dura tamen molli saxa cauantur aqua,” “What

is more hard than rock, what softer than water? | Yet hard rocks are hollowed out by soft water"). It may not reveal as "ideal" a reading as its neighbours (the graffito gives a clumsy misquotation of the hexameter and does not strike up immediate conversation with the other couplets), but it does capitalise on the erotodidactic affinities of all three texts to frustrate the bawd's advice by quoting from an Ovidian passage that teaches how even a Penelope can be won over in the end. In moving from elegiac texts in the didactic mode to a didactic text in elegiacs, the graffito also points to the generic ascent embarked upon by Ovid in progressing from the *Amores* to the *Ars*. Ovid's subsequent ascent simultaneously to the epicising elegy of the *Fasti* and the elegiacizing epic of the *Metamorphoses* (Hinds 1987: 99–134) imparts to his pre-exilic career a teleology paralleled only by Virgil (Harrison 2002; Farrell 2004) but identifiable in Propertius and, to a lesser extent, Tibullus. The Propertian corpus opens with a statement of Cynthia's primacy (1.1.1), its centre (if 2.34–3.1 is the "centre" of the Propertian corpus) can be mapped onto the Callimachean midpoint of *Georgics* 2–3 (Nelis 2005; Thomas 1983: 101–3), and its last book sounds the keynote of a very Virgilian (though possibly also Gallan) *maxima Roma* at 4.1.1 (O'Rourke 2010). At the same time, the persistence of erotic themes and the resurrection of Cynthia in 4.7–8 ultimately resists any straightforward identification with the Virgilian career-path (Heyworth 2010). Necessarily more amorphous, the truncated Tibullan corpus effects a desultory ascent from the agro-pastoral poetics of 1.1 (Putnam 2005) through an epinician (1.7) and hymn (2.1) of Hellenistic inspiration (Murgatroyd 1980: 209–11; Cairns 1979: 126–34) towards an elegy (2.5) that is conversant with (Propertius' conversations with) *Aeneid* 8 (Maltby 2002a), though also followed by a reaffirmation of Tibullan *militia amoris* (2.6).

Chronology accounts in part for the increasing control exercised by the elegists over the Virgilian oeuvre. Tibullan and Propertian *recusationes* distance themselves from epic first and from Virgilian epic only later. Thus Propertius 1.7 and 1.9 impress upon Ponticus, who seeks to "contend with Homer" (1.7.3), the futility of martial epic on the grounds that "in love, a line of Mimnermus is worth more than Homer" (1.9.11). The speaker of Tibullus 1.1 discloses that he is "given to the long road" of Messalla's campaigns (1.1.26), but not before he has rejected the "trumpet-blasts of Mars" (1.1.4) in favour of elegiac *paupertas*. Propertius 2.34.61–82, on the other hand, is able to align elegy with the *Eclogues* in contradistinction to the nascent *Aeneid* in a remarkably systematic way (Thomas 1996: 241–44), while 3.4.1 invokes the *incipit* of the *Aeneid* to portray the poet as a beneficiary of, but not a participant in, Caesar's military exploits (Cairns 2003). Conversely, Ovid's *Amores* invoke the *incipit* of the *Aeneid* (as well as of Propertius 1: Keith 1992) from the outset, with masterful reproduction of its consonantal and vocalic texture (McKeown 1989: 12), as a means of showing the road almost taken. Propertius 4.1.69 achieves a similar effect to associate elegy with Virgilian epic: *sacra dicesque canam et cognomina prisca locorum* ("of sacred rites and days I sing, and ancient place-names") brings to the ear of many readers the *incipit* of the *Aeneid* (*Arma uirumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris*), notwithstanding the coincidence of only a single word.

As elegy negotiates a reconciliation with a genre it had always refused, it engenders a tension with the Callimacheanism it had always espoused. Propertius' fourth book, as a refusal to refuse the themes of Virgilian epic, becomes intertextually and generically hyper self-conscious (DeBrohun 2003). At 4.1.57 Propertius announces *moenia namque pio conor disponere uersu* ("For I aim to mark out walls in pious verse"), where the epithet of

Virgil's hero is fittingly applied to a poetry which has just recapitulated, with obvious Virgilian reference, the story of Rome's rise from the ashes of Troy (4.1.39–56). This dense phrase (*disponere* is here used in both its literal/architectonic and metaphorical/rhetorical senses [TLL s.v. V.1.1421,3–1425,24]) simultaneously invokes Callimachus' account of the foundation of his native Cyrene (Gazich 1997), where "Phoebus weaves foundations" (θεμείλια Φοῖβος ὑφαίνει, *hy.* 2.57), a formulation no less dense (weaving is a common metaphor for poetic composition, but to weave foundations is challenging). The similarity is all the more conspicuous for its occurrence at the same line number in each poem (on "stichometric intertextuality," see the discussion of L. Morgan 1999: 23–7, 223–6). The allusion thus thematises itself as Propertius lays the foundations of his verse on Callimachus' blueprint and reminds us, as he redirects the slender stream of his poetry (59) to Virgilian themes, that Callimachus too had written patriotic verse, and that, although the hypotext of the *recusatio* was the elegiac *Actia*, the source of the water imagery so prevalent here and throughout Propertius (Kambylis 1964) was the hexameter hymn to which these lines allude. In this way, Propertius appropriates Virgil, a singer of ktistic poetry, as a Callimachean (and therefore Propertian) poet. As the "Roman Callimachus" (64, footnoting the intertext) sings the rise of Rome, rising too are the hilltops of his native Umbria ("let whoever beholds from her valleys those rising heights [*scandentis...arces*] judge those walls by my genius!" 65–6) in tandem with the ascent of elegy (*surgit opus*, 67). Ovid's farewell to the *Amores* appropriates these lines ("let any visitor who looks upon watery Sulmo's walls ... say, 'You who were able to produce such a poet, however small you are, I call you great!,'" *Amores* 3.15.11–14) conversely to predicate Ovidian genius on love-elegy as traditionally conceived (K. Morgan 1977: 24–5), but not without signalling generic ambitions of a Propertian kind.

As the *recusatio* had since *Eclogue* 6 (if not the *Actia* Prologue) refused epic themes on a point of Callimachean aesthetic principle, epic becomes an intertextual matrix against which elegy is always implicitly read. The following three sections will therefore consider elegy's intertextuality with the different registers of epos.

3. Elegy and Pastoral

Erotic subject-matter, generic humility, and neoteric provenance give Roman elegy and pastoral much to talk about (Fantazzi 1966): *Eclogue* 10 translates the lovelorn Gallus, together with "quotations" from his *Amores*, into Virgil's pastoral text (so Servius *ad Ecl.* 10.46), just as Propertius 1.18 and 2.19, Tibullus 2.3 (in the narrator's reality, and on many more occasions in his wishful thinking), and *Amores* 2.16 translate the elegist or his beloved, and therewith the elegiac text, into pastoral. Virgil's pastoralization of Hellenistic bucolic was so comprehensive (Halperin 1983; Hunter 2006: 115–40) that the *Eclogues* pervade all elegiac iterations in this vein (Day 1938: 80–4). Whether or not there existed a discrete tradition of pastoral elegy in which the lover always got his girl or boy (Fantuzzi 2003), Virgilian pastoral and Roman elegy emerge from their interactions in generally benevolent opposition, the former as a genre of requited love and "presence," the latter of unrequited love and "absence" (Hardie 2002: 123–7): Virgil's Gallus fails to find a *remedium amoris* in Arcadia (Conte 1986: 100–27), just as rustication brings no requital or presence to his elegiac successors. It

may be wondered, therefore, whether Ovid's prescription of the countryside at *Remedia* 169–98 can be a truly effective remedy for elegiac love (Fulkerson 2004).

To some extent a product of generic self-definition, the distinction between pastoral presence and elegiac absence breaks down in revealing ways. The synopsis of the *Eclogues* at Propertius 2.34.67–76 tendentiously constructs pastoral *amor* as something more blissful than in practice it is: in a conspicuous allusion to the homoerotic triangle that opens *Eclogue* 2 (2.34.73–4; cf. *Eclogue* 2.1–2), Propertius' envy of *felix* ... *Corydon* occludes the desperation of his Virgilian counterpart (*nec quid speraret habebat*). In a yet more intricate misreading, Propertius has Virgil sing *utque decem possint corrumpere mala puellas* ("how ten apples can seduce girls," 2.34.69), thereby looking through the homoeroticism of the Virgilian comparand (*quod potui, puero siluestri ex arbore lecta | aurea mala decem misi*, "I sent what I could to the boy – ten golden apples picked from a woodland tree," *Eclogue* 3.70–71) to its heterosexual source in Theocritus' third *Idyll*, but pointedly not to the erotic failure there suffered: for Propertius' Virgil, ten apples *possint corrumpere*, whereas Theocritus' δέκα μάλα ("ten apples," 3.10) are rejected by Amaryllis. In such a "window allusion" Propertius' memory can hardly be at fault (so Butler and Barber 1933 and Richardson 1977 *ad loc.*); rather, under its very erasure there emerges in Virgilian pastoral an "elegiac sensibility" (Kenney 1983) with which the elegists have much in common.

Tibullus' "goût des choses rustiques" (Cartault 1909: 39–50; Wray 2003: 228–41) produces rich and complex intertextualities with the alterity and similarity of Virgil's *Eclogues*, which arguably provided a structural model for the ten poems of Tibullus 1 (Leach 1978 and 1980). Elegy 1.1 recontextualises *dinitiae* ("wealth," the first word of the collection) in Virgilian terms as a pastoral simplicity and erotic fulfillment which are, as also in Virgil, ever receding under the pressures of historical intertexts. In *Eclogue* 1 this is brought out in the contrasting fortunes of Tityrus and Meliboeus, and it is instructive programmatically and thematically that the speaker of Tibullus' inaugural elegy synthesises different aspects of these interlocutors (Putnam 2005: 130–40). On the one hand, in retaining his estate, however diminished (*uos quoque, felix quondam, nunc pauperis agri | custodes, fertis munera uestra, Lares*, "you as well, Lares, guardians of land **once prosperous**, though now reduced, bring your offerings," 1.1.19–20), the Tibullan speaker inverts the dispossessed Meliboeus of *Eclogue* 1 (*ite meae, felix quondam pecus, ite capellae*, "go, my goats, **once prosperous** herd, go," *Eclogue* 1.74), just as planting vines in season (*ipse seram teneras maturo tempore uitis*, 1.1.7) is a dream which Meliboeus can no longer entertain (*insere nunc, Meliboe, puros, pone ordine uitis*, "Graft your pears now, Meliboeus, set your vines in rows," *Eclogue* 1.73, a bitter echo of the favour conferred on Tityrus at v. 45). On the other hand, Tibullus 1.1 speaks pastorally mostly in subjunctives and futures: pastoral presence is deferred by the speaker's military service with Messalla (as is finally revealed at 1.1.25–6: see Kennedy 1993: 13–15), just as it will be deferred in his erotic *militia* with Delia. As in the *Eclogues*, pastoral is made available to Tibullus by, and through cooperation with, the same forces as threaten to take it away (see Johnson 1990).

Pastoral's complicity with modernity recurs in Tibullus 1.10. In a denunciation of the mercenary present (*diuitis hoc uitium est auri, nec bella fuerunt | faginus astabat cum scyphus ante dapes*, "this is the fault of wealthy gold: there were no wars when a **beechen** **grail** stood before the feast," 1.10.7–8), the simplicity of the past is belied by the lexical rarity with which it is described (see Maltby 2002 *ad loc.*). The adjective *faginus* is probably

a Virgilian coinage in its first attested occurrence at *Eclogue* 3.37 of the beechen cups wagered by Menalcas (*pocula ponam* | *fagina*), while the Greek loan-word *scyphus* is a Homeric *hapax* (*Odyssey* 14.112) derived from the Theocritean cup-ecphrasis that provides Virgil's model (*Idyll* 1.143), but that Virgil himself doesn't reproduce until *Aeneid* 8.278 (Wills 1987). Tibullus, who has had his eye on the prize of *Eclogue* 3 since the midpoint couplet of 1.1 (Wray 2003: 234–7), eschews the paradox of the well-read shepherd, yet signals his awareness of Virgilian complexity in a way that exposes pastoral simplicity as the construct of urban sophisticates.

For an artificiality that requires also the complicity of the reader, elegy has been described as “pastoral in city clothes” (Veyne 1988: 101–15). To this extent, Tibullus' rustic settings may be said to dress elegy “in pastoral clothes.” Here Tibullan elegy differentiates itself, perhaps wilfully, from the more urban *mise en scène* of Propertius 1 (Knox 2005, however, argues for a different chronology), and there are indications of counter-response in Propertius 2 (Lyne 1998: 524–44; Keith 2008: 69–73). Claiming the pen as mightier than the sword as an effective response to Cynthia's faithlessness, 2.5.21–6 systematically rejects as the behaviour of a *rusticus* (25) the very examples of countryside *militia amoris* for which the war-weary Tibullus longs at 1.10.51–66 (rending clothes, breaking doors, and tugging hair), thereby misappropriating Tibullan simplicity (*rusticus*, 1.1.8) to promote a rival impression of Propertian urbanity. Ovid's response in *Amores* 1.7 is at once more urbane than Propertius and yet more boorish than Tibullus.

The more urban atmosphere of Propertius 1 may for its part be a reaction away from the wild surrounds that intertextual analysis suggests were the backdrop of Gallan elegy (Cairns 2006: 127–40). An excursion into *deserta loca* in 1.18 to seek consolation in nature (*uos eritis testes, si quos habet arbor amores*, “you will be my witnesses, if trees have any love,” 19) witnesses the signature of Virgil's Gallus, whose vain attempt to commune with nature by carving his “love” and his *Love Poems* onto trees (*tenerisque meos incidere amores | arboribus*, *Eclogue* 10.53–4), apparently in imitation of Callimachus' Acontius, is now imitated in turn by Propertius (1.18.21–2):

a quotiens **teneras** resonant mea uerba sub umbras,
scribitur et uestris *Cynthia* corticibus!

Ah! How often my words re-echo beneath your delicate shade,
and on your bark is inscribed *Cynthia*!

Intertextual echo is here adumbrated as an integral aspect of textual production and reception as Propertius inscribes into the shadowlands of the *Eclogues* (cf. *Eclogue* 1.4, 10.75–6) the intertextual presence of the absent Cynthia (Hardie 2002: 126–7; Pincus 2004: 179–87).

4. Elegy and Didactic

Elegy's pretensions to a didactic voice are witnessed in the erotodidactic couplets quoted by the Pompeian reader(s). *Ars* 1.475–6 (§2 above) derives its authority from the last lines of Lucretius' diatribe on *amor* in *De Rerum Natura* 4 (“Don't you see that even drops of water falling on rocks (*saxa*) in the long run bore through those rocks (*saxa*)?”)

where, inversely, the image applies to the male addressee advised to habituate himself to *non*-elegiac partnership – or, after an Ovidian reading, what he *thinks* is non-elegiac partnership. Ovid's many intertextualities with the *DRN* in his erotodidactic works (Sommariva 1980; Shulman 1981) vacillate in this way between assumption and dismantlement of Lucretian emotional control.

Ovidian erotodidaxis is the natural destination in elegy of the didactic genre, but not the beginning of the journey. The same passage of the *Ars* reads the Lucretian image through Tibullus 1.4.18 (see Maltby 2002 *ad loc.*) where an erotodidactic Priapus gets his hands on Lucretian and Virgilian didactic years before Ovid (Fabre-Seris 2004). The narrator of Propertius 4.5 endows the *lena* with knowledge of Lucretian science and Virgilian paradoxography, and has her colour her own speech with georgic imagery (see Hutchinson 2006 *ad* 4.5.9, 18, 61) and language, advising her charges to size-up their clients (*nec tibi displiceat miles non factus amori*, “nor should you be averse to a soldier not cut out for love,” 49) as Virgil recommends careful selection of breeding-stock (*nec mihi displiceat maculis insignis et albo*, “nor would I be averse to the one marked with white spots,” *Georgics* 3.56, *displicere* occurring only here in Propertius and Virgil). This intertextual wink has serious implications if the reader also recalls the anthropomorphic sufferings of those same animals in the figurative plague of love (see Gale 2000). Similarly, when Propertius advises the “unbroken” Lynceus to submit to the yoke of love (2.34.47–50, cf. 2.3.47–50: identical line numbers), he contradicts Callimachus’ light-hearted use of this erotic *topos* (ἡλθεν ὁ βούς ὑπ’ ἄροτρον ἐκούσιος, “**the ox came willingly under the plough**,” *Epigram* 45.3 Pf.) with the darker realities of georgic life (*Georgics* 3.206–11, precisely where Virgil introduces the topic of animal *amor*):

sed non ante graui **taurus** succumbit **aratro**,
cornua quam ualidis haeserit in laqueis,
nec tu tam duros per te patieris amores:
trux tamen a nobis ante domandus eris.

(Propertius 2.34.47–50)

But no bull submits to the heavy **plough** before
he has been caught by the horns in a strong lasso,
nor by yourself will you suffer such hard love:
though wild, you must beforehand be broken by me.

[...] namque ante domandum
ingentis tollent animos, prensique negabunt
uerbera *lenta pati* et *duris* parere *lupatis*.
sed non ulla magis uiris industria firmat
quam Venerem et caeci stimulos auertere amoris,
siue boum siue est cui gratior usus equorum.

(Virgil, *Georgics* 3.206–11)

[...] for before their breaking
they will kick up a mighty fuss, and when seized will refuse
to suffer pliant whips or to consent to the hard bit.
But no endeavour firms up their strength more
than to ward off Venus and the spurs of hidden love,
whether one's preference is the business of cattle or of horses.

The allusion (single-underlined) inverts both form (Virgil begins *ante domandum* and ends *sed non*, Propertius begins *sed non* and ends *ante domandus*) and content (Virgil warns the farmer to protect his bull from love, Propertius advises Lynceus to submit to love). In likening Lynceus to a bull, Propertius also inverts Virgil's anthropomorphising account of bovine love and signals a reversion (double-underlined) to the inverse Lucretian assimilation of humans to animals (*u^ualidis Veneris compagibus haerent*, "they [dogs] are caught in the strong fastenings of Venus," *DRN* 4.1204; cf. *DRN* 4.1264–7) with which Virgil had taken issue, while at the same time retaining for elegy's purposes the corrective Virgilian insinuation that erotic angst is common to all creatures. Ovid takes on this intertextually freighted *topos* both in the *Amores*, where he opts to concede to love on the basis that compliant oxen and horses suffer less (1.2.13–16, *lupata* occurring in the same *sedes* and only here in Ovid and Virgil), and in the *Ars*, first in the poem's announcement that Amor is to be tamed by Ovid (1.19–20, the ultimate inversion of the *topos*), and later at, e.g., *Ars* 1.471–2 ("tempore difficiles ueniunt ad aratra iuuenti, | tempore *lenta* pati frena docentur equi," "in time stubborn oxen come to their ploughs, in time horses are taught to suffer the *pliant* reins") where, as well as alluding to *Georgics* 3 (as italicised), Ovidian erotodidaxis brings this intertextual journey full-circle to Tibullus' erotodidactic Priapus (1.4.16).

Nor is didactic intertextuality confined to passages in which the *amator* or another speaks as *praeceptor amoris*. Another source for elegy's pastoral colour is the moralising account of early man at *De Rerum Natura* 5.925–1457. Ovid radically recontextualises this passage at *Ars*. 2.473–92 to show how to civilise an angry girlfriend (Miller 1997: 387–91), and in doing so takes his predecessors' elegiacization of Lucretius' *Kulturgeschichte* as far as it could go (cf. Prop. 3.13.25–50). The opening word and sentiment of Tibullan elegy ("Wealth [*diuitias*] is for another to amass for himself in yellow *gold* ... May my frugal existence escort me though a life of inaction [*me mea paupertas uita traducat inerti*]," 1.1.1, 5) have much in common with Lucretius' invocation of an Epicurean dictum (*Sent. Vat.* 25) in the context of the adverse effects of, precisely, *gold* (5.1113) on the development of society: "wealth (*diuitiae*, in the same *sedes*) aplenty it is for a man to live frugally (*uiuere parce*) with a balanced mind; for there is never poverty (*penuria*) of a little. But men wanted to be famous and powerful ... that being rich they might be able to pass a quiet life (*placidam ... degere uitam*)" (5.1118–22).

Lucretius here finds an unlikely ally in a genre typified by the kind of anguish that an Epicurean would by definition seek to avoid. That Propertius can be dubbed a poet of "love and death" (from the title of Papanghelis 1987) makes elegy implicitly intertextual with the central books of Lucretian epic: *DRN* 3 combats the fear of death, *DRN* 4 the surrender to elegiac-style love. Lucretius' other *bête noire* is fear of the gods, and the poem's progressive redefinition of Venus as a symbol of Epicurean *uoluptas* (pleasure) constitutes a further intertextual challenge for an elegiac reader. This intertextuality is not necessarily oppositional. Although Tibullus' opening conversation with *DRN* 5 breaks into disagreement a few lines later with a declaration of rustic piety ("For I worship at any solitary tree-stump in the fields or ancient stone at the crossroads that is garlanded with flowers," 1.1.11–2) which directly contravenes Lucretian policy ("Nor is it piety at all to be seen often to veil one's head and turn towards a stone and approach every altar," 5.1198–9), the elegist's re-mystification of the divine is also bound up with his erotic angst (1.2.81–8 follows up with an image of Tibullus' humiliation at Venus'

temple). The two-way commerce of intertextuality requires that the elegist's suffering at the hands of Venus cannot challenge Lucretian philosophy without also endorsing it, for the elegist is precisely the sort of figure whom Lucretius satirises in *DRN* 4.

Renouncing Cynthia at the end of Book 3, Propertius concedes that he was once such a laughingstock (*risus eram*, 3.25.1). That this perspective has been learned from reading Lucretius is signalled by a recent trip to "learned Athens" in 3.21 to escape from love: explaining that "care/anxiety (*cura*) for a girl grows from constant gazing (*assidue spectando*), love itself provides its own greatest nourishment (*alimenta*)" (3.21.3–4), Propertius brings to mind Lucretius' atomistic *remedium* whereby "one must flee the images of the beloved (*simulacra*, i.e. the atomic effluences which torment the lover's sensory organs) and ward off the fodder of love (*pabula amoris*)" (*DRN* 4.1063–4), since "Venus deceives lovers with *simulacra* and they cannot derive satisfaction from gazing (*spectando*)" (1101–2). Yet for all Propertius' resolve, Cynthia's next appearance as an *umbra* (ghost) in 4.7 seems to turn Lucretian didactic on its head.

5. Elegy and Martial Epic

In the *recusatio* (see §2) and elsewhere, Homeric and Virgilian epic are a constant intertext in elegy's self-definition as not-epic. The abnegation of gigantomachic and historical themes at Propertius 2.1.17–46 is framed by overt references to the *Iliad* which are illustrative of how epic, though in one sense rejected, is nevertheless incorporated into elegy: Propertius first proclaims that in their bedroom battles he and his mistress "compile long *Iliads*" (2.1.14), and then claims that his mistress "disapproves of the entire *Iliad* on account of Helen" (2.1.50). The dynamics of Homeric intertextuality in Propertius can be seen to operate according to one or both of these statements, the former representing an "heroicization" of elegy, the latter an "elegiacization" of Homer (Berthet 1980; Dalzell 1980; Benediktson 1985). A series of elegies in the transmitted Book 2 variously compare and contrast Cynthia with Briseis and Propertius with Achilles (Dué 2002: 91–114): most conspicuously, 2.8.29–38 reconstructs the entire *Iliad* as an elegiac narrative in which Achilles "suffers all for fair Briseis' sake" (2.8.35; cf. 3.12.23–37 for an equivalent retelling of the *Odyssey*), although 2.9.3–16 concedes that Cynthia is no Penelope or Briseis, and in 2.22 Propertius' heroic monogamy falters when he himself admits to a libido that makes him an Achilles or Hector in love (2.22.34). The elevation of the *amator* to heroic status and the eroticisation of epic narrative highlight the different value-systems which obtain in each genre, but also suggest that the lover and the soldier share an analogous commitment to their respective causes. Since Achilles was cited by Philodemus as an initially negative exemplum of the consequences of uncontrolled passion (Asmis 1991: 25), an Epicurean reading of elegy (see §4) might further conclude that the elegist's identification with the heroic psychology is as appropriate as it is reprehensible. As with the conceit of *militia amoris*, then, there are numerous ways to construe the radical reconfiguration of Homeric *arma* within the domain of elegiac *amor*.

Among Tibullus' numerous recontextualisations of Homeric and Virgilian epic (Levin 1983), a particularly subtle but wholesale instance is witnessed in Tibullus 1.3 (Bright

1978: 16–37; Levin 1983: 2021–33), conceived as written from the poet’s sickbed on “Phaeacia” (*me tenet ignotis aegrum Phaeacia terris*, “Phaeacia detains me in illness in her unknown lands,” 1.3.3). In referring to Corcyra by her Homeric nomenclature, Tibullus alludes to the ancient *zêtéma* which debated the identity of the island on which Odysseus comes ashore at the end of *Odyssey* 5 (*ignotis ... terris* conveys Tibullus’ unfamiliarity with his environs but also refers to scholarly uncertainty as to the whereabouts of Phaeacia) and with this single word activates a Homeric resonance which informs and transforms the entire elegy. Stranded on Corcyra while campaigning with Messalla, Tibullus becomes an elegiac anti-hero, wandering across the Mediterranean and enduring a brush with death (Tibullus’ imaginary arrival in Elysium at 1.3.57–66 is parallel to Odysseus’ *katabasis* in *Odyssey* 11) in search of a *nostos* about which, unlike Odysseus, he can only fantasise, and in which he imagines himself returning to a girl whom we suspect is no Penelope (“but you, please, remain chaste,” 1.3.83). Odysseus’ progress away from fantasyland is thus inverted as Tibullus indulges in Homeric fantasy to escape from reality. The Homeric framework elevates Tibullan suffering, but Tibullan suffering also inverts heroic values: travel and war now lead to decline, martial valour is not to be sought but avoided. Inversely, too, the latent anti-heroism of Odysseus and the epic’s suppressed anxieties about female autonomy are exposed and amplified as Tibullus confronts his inglorious mortality.

A more formal element of epic narrative is reconstituted in the “extended similes” of Ovid’s *Amores* (Boyd 1997: 90–131). In one of the most elaborate examples, Ovid compares Corinna’s guilty blush to the dawn, to a bride upon seeing her groom, to roses among lilies, to a lunar eclipse, and to tinted ivory (2.5.33–42). Transcending elegiac confines, this concatenation of similes also gradually discloses an intertextuality with Lavinia’s blush at *Aeneid* 12.64–9 and with its source at *Iliad* 4.141–2 (McKeown 1998: 38; Boyd 1997: 110–16): in likening Corinna’s rubescence to “the Assyrian ivory a **Maeonian woman** dyed” (*Maeonis Assyrium femina tinxit ebur*, 2.5.40), Ovid reinstates the details of the Homeric simile (Ὡς δ’ ὅτε τις τ’ ἐλέφαντα γυνὴ φοίνικι μύνη | **Μηρόνις**, “as when a **Maeonian woman** stains ivory with purple”) that Virgil had omitted (*Indum sanguineo ueluti uiolauerit ostro* | *si quis ebur*, “just as if someone had defiled Indian ivory with blood-red purple,” 12.67–8) when transferring to Lavinia’s virginal blush the imagery of bloodshed from Homer’s eroticised description of a leg-wound. The violence with which the Virgilian simile is darkly imbued becomes more explicit when in the ensuing lines Ovid confesses that he was tempted to assault Corinna. She for her part is either less chaste than Lavinia (she has been caught cheating) or else amplifies the possibility (detected by Lyne 1983) that Lavinia too had autonomous desires that did not necessarily conform to patriarchal expectation. In becoming, however remotely, a frustrated Turnus, Ovid aggrandizes his elegiac persona even in a moment of chagrin, and simultaneously exposes an elegiac subplot in the latter books of the *Aeneid*.

Close and sustained experimentation with Virgilian epic is also a feature of Propertius 4 (Becker 1971; Robinson 2006: 203–8). Three of its elegies engage, appropriately for a Roman *Aetia*, with the most overtly Callimachean book of the *Aeneid*: the juxtaposition of primitive and modern Rome at 4.1.1–38 reworks Aeneas’ *periegesis* of proto-Rome (*Aeneid* 8.306–69), but from the inverse temporal perspective (Rothwell 1996); the description of the Battle of Actium in 4.6 competes with Virgil’s ecphrasis of the same

event, even reproducing its medial position on the shield of Aeneas (*in medio*, *Aeneid* 8.675) at the centre of the book (Caston 2003); 4.9 compresses the Hercules-Cacus epyllion at *Aeneid* 8.190–275 and adds a ridiculous sequel, disrupting Virgilian aetiology in the process (Hutchinson 2006: 6) and constructing the Virgilian narrative as an epigonal excerpt from what in reality is its successor. 4.6 and 4.9 also frame a pair of elegies which recognise but invert the basic Homeric architecture of the *Aeneid* by moving, via the Gates of Sleep (4.7.87–8 ~ *Aeneid* 6.893–9), from elegies of Iliadic to Odyssean inspiration (Hubbard 1974: 149–52; Dimundo 1990: 27–43; Evans 1971).

In a further exploration of midpoint poetics, the funereal opening of *Aeneid* 7 (Aeneas buries his nurse with due honours) is reproduced at the opening of 4.7 (Cynthia's ghost complains of Propertius' neglect at her funeral) with astonishing lexical accuracy: in the fifth line of each text (i.e. in exact stichometric alignment) occurs the Virgilian hapax *exsequiae* ("funeral"), a word particularly at home in elegy as a genre of lament, and whose root also hints at the intertextual "tracking" of which it is an example. The allusion signposts not so much Propertius' similarity to Virgil as Virgil's similarity (at the midpoint of the *Aeneid*) to Propertius. Female mortality is thus flagged as a central theme through which both Virgil (Keith 2000; Nugent 1999) and Propertius (Habinek 1998: 122–36; Janan 2001; Gold 2007) interrogate patriarchal ideology. In this regard Dido, as an elegiac presence in Virgilian epic (Cairns 1989: 129–50), is a conspicuous locus of intertextual activity: she is refracted in the dead and moribund women of Propertius 4 (Heyworth 1999: 72; Warden 1978; Allison 1980), and the championing of her viewpoint has been identified as a unifying strategy in the elegies ascribed to Sulpicia (Keith 1997; Hallett 2002). Ovid's quip that no part of the *Aeneid* was read more than the story of illicit love between Dido and Aeneas (*Tristia* 2.533–6) is cited with justifiable frequency, yet readers tend less frequently to follow through on the exculpatory context that maintains that an elegiac Virgil is not necessarily an anti-Augustan Virgil (B. Gibson 1999). It is an imperative of intertextuality that, for example, Propertius 4.10 resists a closural reading of the *Aeneid* (Ingleheart 2007) only to the extent that it canonizes its intertext and acknowledges as dominant the reading resisted.

6. The Anxiety of Influence

Authorising and canonizing implications impart to intertextuality a potential for emulation and rivalry, an aspect of imitation recognised also in antiquity (Russell 1979). These impulses have been theorised by Harold Bloom as an "anxiety of influence" (Bloom 1973 and 1975) which, though historicising, is a framework wherein intertextual relationships in classical literature have been profitably analysed (Hardie 1993: 116–9; Martindale 1993: 36–9). When the erotodidactic Ovid prescribes elegiac bibliographies for the lover (and the reader of love-poetry) to read or avoid (*Ars* 3.329–46; *Remedia* 759–66), he not only inscribes himself into the canon, but also engages in a Bloomian "misprision," or wilful taking amiss, of his predecessors: *cuius opus Cynthia sola fuit* ("[you] whose work was Cynthia alone," *Remedia* 764) is a recognisable periphrasis for "Propertius," but one that occludes the generic expansion of late Propertian elegy which Ovid claims for himself in this work: dismissing *Linor*

edax (“gnawing envy,” 389), the poet of the *Remedia* declares that elegy owes to him what epos owes to Virgil (395–6).

Bloomian anxiety is personified also in the final poem of *Amores* 1, which expands on Apollo’s rebuff of Phthonos in the epilogue to Callimachus’ second hymn by replying to *Liur edax* (1.15.1) that poetry alone confers immortality, as the ensuing roll-call of poets from Homer to Tibullus amply demonstrates (9–30). The anxiety of influence precludes enumeration of living poets (*pascitur in uiuis Liur; post fata quiescit*, 1.15.39) and so accounts for the conspicuous absence of Propertius, to whom the *Amores* owe so much, and Horace. Absentees, however, are present under erasure: Ovid’s claim to poetic immortality looks to the final poems of Propertius 2 (Tarrant 2002: 16) and Horace *Odes* 3 (McKeown 1989 ad 1.15.1–6, 37–8 and 41–2): the former concludes with a similar roll-call of dead poets down to Gallus and anticipates Propertius’ own immortalization (“Cynthia quin *uiuet* uersu laudata Properti, | hos inter si me ponere Fama uolet,” “Cynthia will live on, praised in the verse of Propertius, if Fame wishes to place me among their number,” 2.34.93–4); *imber edax* (“eroding rain,” *Odes* 3.30.3) poses no more threat to the immortality of Horace’s poetic monument (*non omnis moriar, multaue pars mei | uitabit Libitinam*, “I will not die entirely, and the great part of me will escape Libitina,” 6–7) than *Liur edax* does to Ovid’s (*uiuam, parsque mei multa superstes erit*, “I will live on, and the great part of me will survive,” 42, a line which may confirm Barber’s *uiuet* as the correct reading at Propertius 2.34.93 above).

7. Poetic Immortality

The moment of Tibullus’ admission to the list of dead love-poets is recorded in *Amores* 3.9, an epicedion which replicates Tibullan style to retell in the past tense the death Tibullus imagines for himself in Delia’s embrace in 1.1 and alone on Phaeacia in 1.3 (Maltby 2009: 281–4). Nemesis now appears as an addition to the mourners Tibullus felt himself denied at 1.3.3–10 (*Amores* 3.9.47–58) and corrects the elegist’s prediction at 1.1.60 that in death he would hold Delia in his weakening embrace (*te teneam moriens deficiente manu*) by attesting that the honour went to herself as Delia’s successor (*me tenuit moriens deficiente manu*, 3.9.58); Ovid rewrites Tibullus’ imaginary induction to Elysium by Venus (*ipsa Venus campos ducet in Elysios*, 1.3.58) as a ceremony of canonisation by claiming for Tibullus a place in *Elysia ualle* alongside Calvus, Catullus, and Gallus (3.9.59–66), thereby bringing the history of love-elegy to a close with the imminent conclusion of his own *Amores* (Putnam 2005: 129–30). Tibullan and Virgilian eschatology informs Propertius 4.7 (Solmsen 1961: 281–9) when Cynthia arrives in Elysium to join a now growing chorus of sorrowful lovers (4.7.59–70, where Propertius’ description of Elysium begins at the same line-number as its Tibullan and Ovidian intertexts).

Another Ovidian epicedion mourns Corinna’s parrot (*Amores* 2.6) and meditates with *Amores* 1.15 and 3.9 (Boyd 1997: 166–89) and Propertius 2.34 on the nature of poetic memory and immortality. As an *imitatrix ales* (“winged mimic,” 1) and *loquax humanae uocis imago* (“speaking echo of the human voice,” 37), the parrot is a figure for its own intertextuality with, most obviously, Lesbia’s late sparrow in Catullus 3 (Hinds 1998: 4–5), and by extension becomes analogous to the love-poet whose clichés it “parrots” (Houghton 2000). Like the elegist, it sought to please its girlfriend (*placuisse puellae*, 19),

was a “lover of quiet peace” (*placidae pacis amator*, 26, a phrase which also hints at the elegist’s complex relationship with Lucretius: cf. *DRN* 1.40; 6.73), reserved its last words for its mistress (*Corinna, uale*, 48), and advertises its Callimachean affiliations with a slender tombstone (60) and epitaph proclaiming its verbal skill and devotion to a *domina* (61–2; cf. Propertius 2.1.72; 2.13.35–6; 4.7.85–6; Tibullus 1.3.55–6). More specifically, “sporting a Punic-red beak tinted with ruddy saffron” (*tincta gerens rubro Punica rostra croco*, 22), Corinna’s parrot is identifiable with the doves of Venus that inhabit the cave of Propertius’ poetic investiture and “dip their Punic-red beaks in the Gorgon’s pool” (*tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu*, 3.3.32).

The avian Elysium gained by Ovid’s metapoetic parrot can be de-allegorised as a “dead poets’ society” through comparison with its counterpart in Ovid’s epicedion for Tibullus (2.6.49–58; cf. 3.9.59–66). Ennius’ Homer claimed his soul had transmigrated to the poet of the *Annales* via a peacock (cf. *ales Iunonia* at *Amores* 2.6.55), Horace predicts his own post-mortem metamorphosis into a swan in *Odes* 2.20, poets are explicitly likened to birds in Propertius’ canon of predecessors at 2.34.83–4 (the swan makes its only appearance in Propertius here: cf. *olores* at *Amores* 2.6.53), and birds make slender-throated song in Tibullus’ elegiac Elysium (1.3.60). Intertextuality therefore encourages the view that the admission of Corinna’s parrot among its peers in Elysium (*psittacus has inter nemorali sede receptus | conuertit uolucris in sua uerba pias*, “received among these on a shady perch, the parrot attracts pious birds to its words,” 57–8: for the unusual postponement of the preposition, see McKeown 1998 ad loc.) is analogous to Propertius’ aspiration (with identical anastrophe) to be enrolled in the canon of love-poets at 2.34.94 (*hos inter si me ponere Fama uolet*, see §6 above). *Amores* 2.6 thus becomes a metanarrative for the immortality that intertextuality confers.

8. Afterword: Conversing Verses

One analogy for the intertextual event is metaphor (e.g. *militia amoris*), in which the “vehicle” (*militia*) tropes its “tenor” (*amor*) much as a “source text” alters the reader’s experience of the “target text” (Conte 1986: 52–69). It is significant that the Latin term for “to trope,” *uertere* (see Kennedy in this volume), also features in allusive contexts itself as a trope for intertextuality’s power to “translate” or “paraphrase” (*uertere*: *OLD* s.v. 24) texts into other texts. Propertius’ metamorphic Vertumnus (4.2), in some way symbolic of the changeful poetics of the poetry book in which he appears, ponders diverse etymologies of his name, each derived from *uerto(r)*: the derivation to which Vertumnus lends his own authority (*quod formas unus uertebar in omnis*, “because I could convert my singular self into all forms,” 47) aptly echoes Virgil’s description of the shape-shifting Proteus (*formas se uertet in omnis*, *Georgics* 4.411), whose translation from the *Odyssey* to the end of the *Georgics* signals Virgil’s impending conversion from didactic to heroic epos, a generic ascent which has its counterpart in the Virgilian intertextualities of Propertius 4 (§5). The metapoetic significance of Propertius’ Vertumnus’ was appreciated by Ovid, who completed the god’s translation to epic, via the *Fasti*, in the *Metamorphoses* (Barchiesi 1997: 186–9; Myers 1994: 117–21).

Admitted to its avian Elysium, Corinna’s parrot *conuertit uolucris in sua uerba pias* (*Amores* 2.6.58: §7 above), thereby securing its poetic immortality by converting the

song of its predecessors into its own words (cf. 2.6.18: *uox mutandis ingeniosa sonis*, “a voice adept at altering sounds”). It must be remembered that none of the intertextual conversions proposed in this chapter is possible without the complicity of a conversant reader. Thus Vertumnus introduces a concluding inscription of six *uersus* with a promise not to delay the passerby (57–8), just as the first word of the epitaph for Corinna’s parrot (*colligor*, 61) draws attention to the act of reading. In recording that the deceased was skilled to speak *plus aue* (62), it is left to the passerby to decide whether to read “more than a bird” or “more than ‘hello’” (the parrot’s last word had been “farewell,” 48). Intertextuality resists closure and ensures that death is always a beginning.

FURTHER READING

Conte 1986 (the founding discussion of Latin intertextuality proper), Hinds 1998 and Fowler 1997 are essential theoretically-oriented works on Latin allusion and intertextuality; see also the (exquisitely intertextual) review of Hinds by Conte 1999. Barchiesi 2001 is a stimulating collection of essays, primarily on Ovid but with wide applicability. Martindale 1993 is an important discussion of reception as an ever-situated form of literary commentary. Edmunds 2001 presents a view of intertextuality that readers will find nihilistic or liberating according to their theoretical persuasion. For histories of intertextuality in Latin literature, see Farrell 1991: 3–25 and Edmunds 1995.

Commentaries are a repository of intertextual material: see Fedeli 1965, 1980, 1985, and 2005 and Hutchinson 2006 on Propertius; Maltby 2002 on Tibullus (with a useful *index locorum notabiliorum* at pp. 522–6); Tränkle 1990 on [Tibullus]; and McKeown 1987: 32–62, 1989, and 1998 on Ovid’s *Amores*. La Penna 1950–51, Cartault 1909: 90–134, and Zingerle 1869–71 give extensive (but not exhaustive) lists of localised lexical (rather than narrative or thematic) parallels in Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid respectively. Wills 1996, a monumental compendium of forms of syntactical “repetition,” looks at the activation of allusion by means other than diction or narrative similarity.

Ovidian intertextuality has attracted the greatest number of analyses: Casali 2009 gives a useful overview. Boyd 1997 takes a wider view of allusion in the *Amores* than K. Morgan 1977, which situates echoes of Propertius within a parodic framework; see also the collection in Landolfi and Chinnici 2007. Ovid’s other elegiac works offer important lessons for readers of the *Amores*: on the intensively intertextual *Heroides*, see Kennedy 1984 and 2006, Barchiesi 2001: 29–48 and 105–28, Knox 1995: 19–25. Steudel 1992 is a well-organised discussion of allusion-as-parody in the *Art*; see also Sharrock 1987 and 1994: 197–290. Rosati 2006 and Hardie 2006 uncover Ovid’s meditation on elegiac intertextuality in the *Remedia*. Keith 2008: 45–85 surveys the major literary intertexts in Propertius. For Tibullus, Maltby 2002: 55–66 and Fisher 1983: 1941–53 are useful starting-points; Cairns 1979 and Levin 1983 consider Tibullus’ Hellenistic and epic intertexts respectively.

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CHAPTER 25

Narratology in Roman Elegy

Genevieve Liveley

Beginning

Let me begin by telling a very short story. Once upon a time in the tales told about Roman love elegy across lands near and far, scholars definitively declared that the love poetry of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid told no kind of narrative. Forgetful for the moment of the elegiac genre's long history of storytelling, they decreed that here there was no story to read. They saw the lack of continuity and chronology in and across the collected poems of each elegist as the chief obstacle to reading Roman elegy as narrative poetry (Fränkel 1945, 26; Boucher 1965, 401; Veyne 1988, 50f), but complained too about an absence of plot, action, and event (Veyne 1988, 50f), blaming the elegiac metre and the end-stopped form of the elegiac distich itself as limiting the storytelling potential of Latin love poetry (Heinze 1919; Otis 1966, 24–40). Meanwhile, the readers of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid continued to see stories where there were supposed to be none, tracing narrative arcs across individual episodes and poems, identifying characters and their particularized roles, recognizing unreliable narrators and implied narratees, and negotiating the conflicts and resolutions acted out between poets and *puellae* within the elegiac storyworld. And gradually the stories told about the stories in Roman love elegy began to change. So, less than forty years after Jean-Paul Boucher had declared that Propertius's love poetry had “no beginning, no ending analogous to that of a novel” (Boucher 1965, 401), Niklas Holzberg could propose that Ovid's *Amores* be read as an “erotic novel” and its novelistic narrative form regarded as typical of the genre (Holzberg 2002). Today, the development of elegiac stories across poems – and across metrical barriers – is widely recognized (see Liveley and Salzman-Mitchell 2008 and the special edition of *Helios* 2010 on elegy and narratology), and narrativity is now

seen as fundamental to the distinctive character and shape of Roman love elegy. A happy ending which, like all such endings, marks also the beginning of a new chapter: literally so in this case, as I set out to explore some of the insights that narratology has to offer into the storyworlds in and about Roman love elegy.

Telling Stories in Roman Love Elegy

The study of narrative in Roman love elegy tends to fall into two categories, the first type concerning itself with the ways in which different forms of story are configured and read across the poems of an elegiac corpus, and the second type with the ways in which the tools and terminologies of narratology (or narrative theory) can be used to investigate the narrative features (or narrativity) of an individual elegy. The fragment-like corpus of poetry written by and about Roman love elegy's only extant female writer, Sulpicia, offers a good case study to illustrate some of the hermeneutic and narratological strategies of both approaches – particularly as this corpus highlights in miniature some of the wider issues pertaining to the study of narrativity in Roman love elegy.

At first blush, the Sulpicia poems (3.8–18 of the *Corpus Tibullianum*, according to the three book division authorized by the OCT) seem an unlikely body of work to qualify for narrative status. Firstly, there is no unified or consistent narrative voice: elegies 9 and 11 are spoken in the first person by a voice purporting to be that of “Sulpicia”; elegies 8, 10, and 12 are spoken by an unidentified third person voice (“some sympathetic poet or friend” according to Kirby Flower Smith (1913, 77), hence the conventional designation of poems 3.8–12 as the “Amicus” poems, the character and voice of Sulpicia in these poems identified hereafter as “Sulpicia”); and elegies 13–18 again make use of the first person but are typically considered to be the only poems in the collection actually written by Sulpicia herself (this character and voice identified hereafter as Sulpicia). Secondly, there is no obvious or linear chronology ordering the arrangement of the poems: neither the Amicus poems (3.8–12, also known as *Sulpicia's Garland*) nor the shorter epigrammatic elegies that follow (3.13–18, those traditionally attributed to Sulpicia's pen) suggest any temporal or chronological sequence. Thirdly, there is no apparent overarching plot or storyline connecting the episodes and events described in the individual poems that make up the collection, and no teleology to the sequence of poems as they have been transmitted to us: with the exception of the diptych poems 3.14 and 3.15, in which a visit to the countryside to celebrate Sulpicia's birthday is planned and then canceled, each elegy seems to stand as an independent poetic and narrative unit.

How, then, can these Sulpicia poems qualify as “narrative,” when Paul Veyne's disavowal of elegy's narrativity seems to describe their non-narrative form so precisely? He argued (with reference to the poetry of Tibullus and Propertius in particular) that:

To believe that our elegists tell the story of their affairs, one must not have read them ... They have no chronology, and each elegy deals with its themes independently of all the others ... The poems do not present the episodes of a love affair – beginnings, declaration, seduction, a falling out ... [I]t is a poetry without action, with no plot leading to denouement or maintaining any tension, and this is why time has no reality in it.

(Veyne 1988, 50–51).

Such, indeed, appears to be the case with the Sulpicia poems. And Veyne appropriately stresses here the importance of “action,” “plot,” “denouement,” and “time” in his evaluation of elegy’s (lack of) narrativity: these are regarded as the defining elements of narrative in both classical and postclassical characterizations, deriving from Aristotle’s original insistence upon a unified plot in which action, crisis and denouement take place in a temporally structured sequence of incidents (*Poetics* 6–11).

But while theories and definitions of narrative still offer broad consensus upon the importance of these key narrative elements, there are now almost as many variant definitions of narrative as there are narratologists: Seymour Chatman (1978), Paul Ricoeur (1984), Gérard Genette (1982), Peter Brooks (1984), Gerald Prince (1987), Mieke Bal (1997), Susan Onega and José Landa (1996), and H. Porter Abbott (2002) have each forwarded their own nuanced definitions, broadly agreeing as to the key characteristics of narrative – summarized in Gérard Genette’s neat formulation, as “the representation of an event or of a sequence of events” (Genette 1982, 127) – but none providing a fully complete or suitably self-sufficient definition. Happily, as part of her endeavor to map a fuzzy-set definition for narrativity, taking all these variants into account and so allowing for a sliding scale of all the criteria that allow a text to qualify for narrative status, Marie-Laure Ryan has now proposed the following comprehensive set of defining characteristics:

Narrative is about problem solving.
 Narrative is about conflict.
 Narrative is about interpersonal relations.
 Narrative is about human experience.
 Narrative is about the temporality of existence. (Ryan 2007, 24)

Judged against these intersecting criteria, the narrativity of the Sulpicia poems seems rather more obvious – and here it is worth examining each of Ryan’s elements in turn and in some detail to demonstrate precisely how the Sulpicia poems (and consequently the other poems in the canon of Roman love elegy) might qualify as narrative under this rubric.

Narrative is about Problem Solving

The problems or “crises” negotiated by the characters named Sulpicia and Cerinthus in the elegiac storyworld of these poems (as indeed by the characters Tibullus and Delia, Propertius and Cynthia, Ovid and Corinna elsewhere in the world of love elegy) are numerous and varied: illness, separation, and infidelity are all presented as problems to be resolved – even though, in several cases, these resolutions are assumed rather than described. So, in elegies 3.10 and 3.17, illness – a commonplace elegiac metaphor for the “disease” of love itself (see Kennedy 1993, 46–63) – offers a foil against which a “love-sick” Sulpicia can test the health of her relationship with Cerinthus. Although no recovery is related, a return to physical and figurative health is read into the spaces between the illness poems and those that follow them. Indeed, it is only appropriate that “Sulpicia” should summon Apollo, god of medicine *and* of poetry, to her aid in elegy 3.10, since

it is to both of these disciplines that she seems to owe her full restoration to health in the very next poem – which does not narrate but nevertheless *tells* us of her recovery. Similarly, in poem 3.14 the lovers are threatened with separation on the occasion of Sulpicia's birthday, which her guardian Messalla wants her to spend in the country (all translations are my own).

Invisus natalis adest, qui rure molesto
 et sine Cerintho tristis agendus erit.
 dulcius urbe quid est? an villa sit apta puellae
 atque Arretino frigidus amnis agro?
 iam nimium Messalla mei studiose, quiescas.
 non tempestivae, saepe propinque, viae.
 hic animum sensusque meos abducta relinquo,
 arbitrio quamvis non sinis esse meo.

(3.14)

Scis iter ex animo sublatum triste puellae?
 natali Romae iam licet esse suo.
 omnibus ille dies nobis natalis agatur,
 qui necopinanti nunc tibi forte venit.

(3.15)

My hated birthday is near and I must spend it
 without Cerinthus but in tears out in the boring countryside.
 What is sweeter than the city? How can a country house
 and a freezing river in Arretine country be right for a girl?
 Now Messalla, you worry about me too much. Relax.
 Sometimes journeys are ill-timed, my dear.
 Kidnapped, I leave my heart and mind behind,
 even though you won't allow me to be my own boss.

Have you heard that the dreaded trip has been lifted along with your girl's spirits?
 Now she can be at Rome for her birthday.
 I hope that day can be celebrated by us all,
 and now comes, perhaps, as no surprise to you.

Once more a resolution to this problem appears to take place in the textual interstice or aporia that separates poem 3.14 from 3.15 where Sulpicia celebrates that the threat has been lifted: the solution to the problem is not narrated, yet poem 3.15 *tells* us that it has happened and even hints (perhaps) that Cerinthus has played some part in its resolution. We find the same pattern again in elegy 3.16, where Sulpicia – according to the traditional template of the elegiac lover's experience in which the beloved's inconstancy and infidelity is a standard topos – complains that Cerinthus (assumed to be the unnamed addressee) has been unfaithful to her with a *scortum* ("strumpet" or "prostitute" – 3.16.4). David Konstan suggests that crises of this nature are fundamental to what he describes as the "master plot" of Roman love elegy (Konstan 1994, 159; see also Skoie 2008), ordinarily leading to a denouement in which the lover finally rejects the beloved and moves on. Here, however, Cerinthus' infidelity seems to be forgiven (if not forgotten) in the very next poem, where Sulpicia seeks

reassurance upon the strength and sincerity of his love for her. No reconciliation is narrated, but the uneasy character of the relationship represented in 3.17, where Sulpicia wants to know whether Cerinthus' love (*cura* – 3.17.1) for her is genuine, and again in 3.18 where she recalls the *apparent* fervor of his love (*cura* – 3.18.1) for her, suggests that some such reconciliation has indeed taken place in the spaces between poems (on reading *between* the poems in Propertius, see Liveley 2010 and in Catullus, see Janan 1994).

Narrative is about Conflict

Ryan's definition of narrative is particularly useful because it exposes some of the assumptions and implications upon which more traditionally formulated definitions rely, among which are the inferences that underpin the emphasis upon "action" and "event" as the *sine qua non* of narrativity. According to Ryan, the notion of action necessarily involves agents: "if these agents decide to take actions, they must have motivations, and they must be trying to solve problems ... [and if] agents have problems, they must experience some sort of conflict" (Ryan 2007, 24). Problem solving and conflict are therefore closely bound in this characterization of narrative and, in the case of Sulpicia, both concern the essential conflict that lies at the heart of all love stories, including the plots of Roman love elegy: conflict between a lover and his or her beloved. So, in the Sulpicia poems – as in the poetry of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid – the overarching narrative focuses upon characters or agents as they come into conflict with each other, with themselves, and with the expectations of Augustan society. The elegiac topos of *militia amoris* – perhaps elegy's most explicit performance of eroticized conflict – may be less straightforwardly available to a female poet than to her male peers, but otherwise, the conflicts and crises encountered by Sulpicia closely mirror those reflected in the poetry of the other elegists. As we have seen, she struggles with stock elegiac narrative topoi involving separation; sexual infidelity; an over-protective guardian or *vir*; her reputation or *fama*; the writing of erotic poetry; and, above all, realizing a mutually shared, equal love – as evinced in the bold declaration of 3.13 that, through her poetry, the world will know she has made an equal match (*cum digno digna fuisse ferar* – "I want it to be said that I was perfectly matched in equal love," 3.13.10). There are then two overarching story lines shaping the narrative of Sulpicia's poetry – the same story-arcs moreover which appear to shape the narrative of all Roman love elegy, sharing the same agents and emplotting the same events: the battle to find and keep an equal love, and the battle to write about it in elegiac form.

Narrative is about Interpersonal Relations

In Roman love elegy conflicts usually arise from the interpersonal relationships and experiences that the genre conventionally demands from its key characters (lover and beloved, their rivals and opponents). Indeed, while some narratologists stress the essential

character of narrative as involving the representation of action and event, crisis and denouement, others stress the importance of the actors or agents – including narrators and narratees – which such a characterization implies and upon which all such action relies (see in particular Prince 1987, Abbott 2002).

Indeed, as a genre explicitly concerned with sex, Roman love elegy is very obviously “about” interpersonal relations. The overarching narratives that are most evident in Roman love elegy typically concern the relationship between the poet-lover and his beloved *puella*, but elegy’s embedded stories – those incidental or tangential narratives that take place within the primary story-arc – similarly concern human relationships: between friends, rivals, bawds, patrons, and any other characters who may happen to inhabit the elegiac storyworld. So, in the few lines that make up the complete corpus of Sulpicia poems, alongside a pantheon of Roman deities we encounter Sulpicia herself (*passim*); her lover Cerinthus (named in 3.9, 10, 11, 14, 17); her mother (3.12); her father (3.16); her uncle and guardian Messalla (3.14); and a prostitute represented as a rival for Cerinthus’ attentions (3.16). And in the more expansive elegiac worlds represented by Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid yet more characters and actors appear and yet more interpersonal relations are developed.

Given the importance of their relationships with these actors, it is remarkable, then, that the Roman love elegists appear to do so little to realize the full characterization or individuation of the other agents in their stories. Here, Propertius’ Cynthia illustrates the point well. Although her name appears as the first word of the very first poem of the first book of Propertius, although she is the named erotic subject of the overwhelming majority of the poems that make up the first three books of the Propertian corpus, and although, as many critics have observed, “Cynthia and the implied narrative of Propertius’ affair with her is the animating force of Propertius’ poetry” (Miller 2004, 60; see also Boucher 1965, 240), still Cynthia remains little more than a cipher (see Wyke 2002; Connolly 2000, 87; McCarthy 2010). In fact, drawing upon Greimas’ narratological description of the different types of “actants” that different narratives employ, Paul Allen Miller has gone so far as to suggest that:

She is less a person than a function. Her role within Propertius’ poetry is more that of a narratological “actant” (an agent construction necessary for narrative progression) than of a fully developed character or “actor” capable of synthesizing and thematizing a variety of “actantial functions.”

(Miller 2004, 63)

Cynthia, Delia, Nemesis, Corinna, and Cerinthus, it seems, are less important in the narratives (and the narrativity) of Roman love elegy than the prominence of their names would suggest.

Perhaps the most significant relationship inscribed in Roman love elegy, then, lies not inside but outside the immediate storyworld and involves the reader or narratee – the audience to whom the elegiac poet-lover implicitly or explicitly speaks in narrating his or her story. Implicit in most narratological models and all narrative texts, this key relationship is explicitly acknowledged in Roman erotic elegy. In the poetry of Sulpicia, acknowledgement of an external reader or narratee to whom the poet desires to “tell her joys” and by whom she desires to have them retold is signaled openly (3.13):

Tandem venit amor, qualem texisse pudori
 quam nudasse alicui sit mihi fama magis.
 exorata meis illum Cytherea Camenis
 attulit in nostrum deposuitque sinum.
 exsolvit promissa Venus: mea gaudia narret
 dicetur si quis non habuisse sua.
 non ego signatis quicquam mandare tabellis
 ne legat id nemo quam meus ante, velim.
 sed peccasse iuvat, vultus componere famae
 taedet. cum digno digna fuisse ferar.

At last love has come. The kind that it would be a greater shame
 to me and my reputation to cover up than to lay bare to someone.
 Persuaded by my poems, Venus brought him and placed him in my lap.
 Venus has kept her promises: let any woman tell the story of my joy,
 if it is said that she has none of her own.
 I wouldn't want to trust anything to writing, signed and sealed,
 so that someone could read me before my man.
 I like to be indiscrete; it's boring to put on a respectable front.
 I want it to be said that I was perfectly matched in equal love.

Here, in addition to her lover, Sulpicia posits Venus as one potential reader – even an ideal reader – of her poetry. But she also speaks directly to and of another intended audience, the external narratees who will read her story as she narrates it to her internal audience – us. The relationship that (we are told) has just been consummated involves us too. The story that Sulpicia will tell in and across the elegies that follow will concern the relationship between poet and reader, narrator and narratee, no less than the relationship between poet and lover (see Flaschenriem 1999, 39f). Cerinthus – whose pseudonym immediately evokes the wax tablets upon which he and Sulpicia's poetry are inscribed (see Percy 2006) – has fallen into Sulpicia's lap, but she – in the form of that same poetry – has fallen into ours.

In this respect, Sulpicia's poem tells us something about the erotics of reading a narrative text. Indeed, in the anxiety that elegy 3.13 reveals about its own reading and reception, and in its intermingling of the narrative roles of lover and reader, this poem shares an uncanny affinity with Peter Brooks' narratological account of the erotics of narrative. He suggests that (Brooks 1994, 50f):

the relation of teller and listener is as important as the content and structure of the tale itself.
 Or rather: the relation of teller to listener inherently is part of the structure and the meaning of any narrative text, since a text ... exists only insofar as it is transmitted, insofar as it becomes part of a process of exchange.

Brooks argues, moreover, that erotic narratives, narratives of desire, reveal a distinctive tendency to tell "of their anxiety concerning their transmissibility, of their need to be heard, of their desire to become the story of the listener" (Brooks 1994, 51; see also Kennedy 2008; Connolly 2000). Sulpicia's desire that others should "tell the story of [her] joy," that her story may be heard, encapsulates a desire that is articulated in and across all such narratives of desire – including (and perhaps *especially*) the narratives of Roman love elegy.

Narrative is about Human Experience

If one of the key conditions for narrativity is the dynamic of interpersonal relations, including – perhaps above all – the inter-relationship between teller and listener, poet and reader, then it might seem somewhat redundant to isolate the concomitant idea that narrative is also about human experience. Ryan’s insistence upon this as a separate and necessary condition arises from the sense that an agenda or a recipe, for example, although representing a temporally and teleologically ordered sequence of events and actions, should not be defined as a narrative text. Following Bal (1997) and Ricoeur (1979), Ryan thus isolates “experience” as a key character of narrativity: it is not enough that events should take place, they must also be “experienced by actors” (Bal 1997, 182). The characteristically subjective form of Roman love elegy ensures that it straightforwardly qualifies for narrative status on such grounds. In fact, traditional descriptions of Roman love elegy make this the hallmark that distinguishes Latin love elegy from its Hellenistic antecedents. So, according to Maltby (1985, 3; see also Kenney and Clausen 1982, 407):

Philetas is known to have written a series of narrative elegies dedicated, like Mimnermus’ *Nanno*, to his wife or mistress, Bittis, but there is no evidence that these were ‘subjective’ elegies of the Roman type, dealing with the poet’s own feelings. ... When they wrote of their own experience of love it was usually in the form of short amatory epigram. Their longer, more developed narrative elegies dealt with the loves of the heroes and heroines of myth. In some ways Latin elegy can be seen as a fusion of these two types. In giving a more developed and serious treatment to his own feelings the Roman poet could take as his starting point a traditional theme from epigram ... ; mythological themes from narrative elegy could then be used to illustrate his own predicament.

Here Maltby draws attention to another level at which Roman love elegy engages with “human experience” as part of its distinctively “subjective” narrative processes: the mythological and intertextual dialogues that the Latin love elegists typically employ in their storytelling (see Barchiesi 2001; Liveley and Salzman-Mitchell 2008; Veyne 1988, 116–131). Particularly telling here is the way in which intertextual allusion in elegy functions to draw in supplementary un-narrated features to an episode or experience and so enlarge or enhance the story being told. One of the ways in which elegy narrates then, is by connecting its own fragments of story to another story or sequence of stories that is already known to its readers, by making the experiences of its actors part of a broader narrative continuum. In this way, as Barchiesi (2001, 32) has observed, “a single elegy can project its own narrative context ... by taking its place in a plot already known in part.” So, by alluding to the parallels between her own experience and those of other literary – and specifically *epic* – heroines, Sulpicia can project a more detailed narrative context and a more nuanced narrative subjectivity than the slender corpus of her elegiac text would seem to allow. Discussing the significance of *fama* in elegy 3.13, Hallett (2006, 38) draws our attention to the intertextual frame that gives shape to the narrative of this poem (see also Keith 1997; Merriam 2006):

By asserting that Cytherea, Venus, has dropped her beloved in her lap, Sulpicia recalls the scenario of *Iliad* 3, in which Aphrodite spirits Paris from the battlefield, drops him into

Helen's bedchamber, and brings him to her for a rendezvous. ... [T]hese references to *fama* also function as an intertextually strategic move within the realm of Augustan poetry. They help evoke Vergil's Dido – who is portrayed as achieving, and victimized by, *fama* in two of its different senses, “public opinion” and “slander” – as the context, and as a literary parallel, for Sulpicia's own amatory situation.

There are numerous parallels for this narrative strategy in Roman love elegy, where allusion and intertextuality contribute just one more dimension to the elegiac storyworld and one more level to the narrativity of this genre.

Narrative is about the Temporality of Existence

While it might seem trivial to point to the repeated birthday motif that recurs in the Sulpicia poems as evidence for Ryan's final qualification that narrative relates in some way (to) the “temporality of existence,” time and temporality certainly play an important role in the telling of stories in and across the Sulpicia poems. Despite their disordered chronology, the poems nevertheless manage to create a clear sense of the relationship between Sulpicia and Cerinthus developing over time – from our first sighting of “Sulpicia” in 3.8, where our attention is focused upon her external beauty, her dress, her gait, her eyes, her hair (her *culta*, 3.8.1), through the dangerous territory of courtship and seduction (figured in elegy 3.9 as a hunt), through mutual erotic attraction and “bonding” (figured in elegy 3.11 according to the elegiac topos of *servitium amoris* as enslavement), through sexual consummation (3.13) and the rocky territory of a sexual relationship, involving the pain of jealousy, uncertainty, and regret (3.16–18). We also see Sulpicia herself maturing (as a woman, as a poet, and as a lover) over time – from the innocent young girl protected and advised by an anxious mother (3.12.15), to the silent young woman now asserting her independence (3.12.16), to the experienced woman who is tired of putting on a respectable front (3.13.9f.) and who balks at the restrictions imposed upon her independence by a fussy guardian (3.14.5), to the woman who, in the final poem of the collection, looks back regretfully at both her youthful follies (3.18.3) and a similar mistake made only “last night” (3.18.5).

In fact, the poems are richly accented with temporal markers: *cum* (when), *nunc* (now), *tunc* (then), *iam* (now), *dies* (days), *annus* (year), *nox* (night), *tandem* (at last), *hesterna* (yesterday), *ante* (previously); the opening poem of the so-called Amicus cycle begins with a date – the Kalends of Mars (the first of March) – and a festival to celebrate it, concluding with a prayer to Apollo and the Muses that Sulpicia be permitted to celebrate this rite for many years to come (*multos consummet in annos* – 3.8.23); the penultimate poem in this cycle celebrates Cerinthus' birthday with an invocation to Natalis, here the omniscient god of birthdays (3.11.19); and the final poem in this cycle opens with an invocation to Juno Natalis (3.12.1), to whom “Sulpicia” prays on her own birthday to help make both her love and her lover last forever (3.12.20). In the cycle of poems traditionally attributed to the authorship of Sulpicia herself, the first poem opens famously with a celebration that her love has at last been consummated – *tandem venit amor* (“at last love has come,” 3.13.1); the next two are concerned with a planned trip to the country to celebrate her birthday;

and in the final poem in the collection Sulpicia apologizes for having left her lover alone the previous night (*hesterna ... nocte* – 3.18.5) after enjoying his apparent affection a few days before (*paucos ante ... dies* – 3.18.2). These (frequent) temporal flags create the impression of time and of action occurring in and over time within, between and across the poems in the collection, providing perhaps the most compelling case for the Sulpicia poems to be considered (both individually and collectively) as telling a story – as narrative.

Narrating Sulpicia's Joys

It is true that, like much poetry, the brevity of the Sulpicia poems provides limited scope for the development of plot, character, or conflict, and thus the development of story (on the arrangement and authorship of the poems see Santirocco 1979; Parker 1994; Holzberg 1998–99; Heath-Stubbs 2000; Skoie 2002 and in this volume; Hallett 2006; Hubbard 2005). For, as Joy Connolly, comparing the narrative potential of poetry in general and telling in particular with that of the most obvious narrative genre, the novel, has observed:

with the notable exception of epic, poetry offers extremely limited access to the novel's narrative resources and, historically, it has been a more rigid writerly mode than most types of prose. In the latter regard, lyric and elegy may be the worst culprits, as they are compact and univocal with little plot and less character development; and they provide fewer opportunities for *story* telling, in itself such an important element of what we generally call narrative structure.

(Connolly 2000, 74, emphasis in original).

The limited opportunity for storytelling afforded by the slender Sulpician corpus of elegiac poetry – only 154 lines in total, its narrative potential further circumscribed by the epigrammatic brevity of individual poems and the marked tendency here, as elsewhere in Latin love elegy, to fit complete sentences within the self-contained unit of each elegiac couplet (see Otis 1966, 40f) – has not, however, prevented numerous critics and commentators from reading the poems together as chapters that make up a novel-like love story (see Skoie 2008, 243–247). So, Smith suggests that, read as a collection, the Sulpicia elegies tell us a “charming story” of two young lovers, our “heroine” Sulpicia and the man she calls Cerinthus, whose amorous adventures and misadventures make up this “romantic chapter” in the *Corpus Tibullianum* (Smith 1913, 77; see also Skoie 2002, 213–256). Indeed, Skoie draws our attention to the long history of reading the Sulpicia poems as a “little novel,” of regarding elegies 3.8–18 as shards of a “fragmented novel” or as “fragments of a love story” (Skoie 2008, 243–247). And among Sulpicia's more recent readers too, critics such as Flaschenriem have been unequivocal in their acknowledgement of the text's narrativity. So, in her analysis of 3.16, Flaschenriem comments:

Here the estrangement of Sulpicia and her beloved punctuates the *love story*, delineating one of its phases or *chapters*, the movement from the glow of infatuation to the suspicion or disillusionment of betrayal. It marks a turning point in the elegiac *narrative*, a juncture at which the *love story* might well conclude.

(Flaschenriem 1999, 46, emphases mine).

The sort of narrative that these readers recognize in the poetry of Sulpicia is typical of Roman love elegy and characteristic of the sort of narrativity described by Chatman as a “nonnarrated story” (Chatman 1978, 166–95). Chatman defines such narratives as those which present themselves to the reader as “untouched transcripts of character’s behaviour” (Chatman 1978, 166; see also McCarthy 2010 on “nonnarrated stories” in Propertius) – that is, the representation of agents, events, crises, and denouements through mimesis rather than diegesis, through *showing* rather than *telling*. We discover that Cerinthus has been unfaithful to Sulpicia, not because a third or even first person narrator tells us this, but because of the “evidence” of 3.16 which shows us this. We understand that the threat of separation in 3.14 is lifted, because the opening line of elegy 3.15 poses a question to Cerinthus that reveals as much: *scis iter ex animo sublatum triste puellae?* (“Do you know/have you heard that the dreaded trip has been lifted along with your girl’s spirits?”). In this context, Smith’s view that the Sulpicia poems provide us with “documents” (Smith 1913, 77) from an Augustan romance – which, to his reading, are more like letters or diary entries than elegiac poetry – is illuminating. Alongside lyric and elegiac poetry, typical examples of nonnarrated narrative genres include the epistolary novel and the diary – genres which, like that of Latin love elegy, are principally characterized by a first-person narrative voice and a mimetic rather than a diegetic mode, appearing to offer us unmediated access to the speech (acts) of characters within the storyworld.

One further characteristic of these nonnarrated narratives that is important here is the discontinuous, episodic form of their storytelling, the fragmented mode of their narrativity. The Sulpicia poems (in particular the short quasi-epigrammatic elegies 3.13–18) present, perhaps, an extreme case of this fragmentation. Moreover, Flaschenriem suggests that for a female elegist “the very act of writing, of modifying the codes of elegiac representation and speaking ‘through’ them, engenders a division – or fragmentation – of the narrator’s poetic self” (Flaschenriem 1999, 48). But such fragmentation – of narrator or narrative – is not limited to the poetry of Sulpicia and is typical of the genre of Latin love elegy as a (divided) whole. W. R. Johnson saw the poetry of Tibullus as representing “a sheer discontinuum, fragmentations of self and work and love” (Johnson 1990, 108), and the same fragmentation is noted by readers of Propertius’ elegies – particularly in book 4 (see Janan 2001 and Liveley 2010). Drawing upon the key narratological concept of “event” – understood as “the transition from one state to another state” (Bal 1997, 5) – Patricia Salzman-Mitchell has recently proposed that elegy characteristically presents its narratives in a succession of individuated “events” or “snapshots,” as epitomized by the anatomization of Corinna’s body in Ovid’s *Amores* 1.5, revealed to the reader in a disconnected series of parts: *umeros* (shoulders), *lacertos* (arms), *papilla* (breasts), *venter* (belly), *latus* (side), *femur* (thigh) – “Why,” asks the poet, “should I narrate every little detail?” (*singula quid referam?* – *Am.* 1.5.23). Viewing Corinna’s *corpus* as analogous to the corpus of Roman love elegy itself, Salzman-Mitchell suggests that the segmented description of the elegiac *puella* here inscribes not only the poetic program of Ovid’s elegiac collection but also the program of its elegiac narrative:

There are parts of Corinna’s body that will not be “told,” and which the reader is invited to imagine and complete. The series of snapshots of Corinna’s “chopped” body, a series of states without transitional events, tells us something important and programmatic about the

way Latin elegy constructs its narratives. Elegy's narrative has a tendency to fragmentation and lack of explicit transitions. Each poem is truly a snapshot, a tableau or moment in a series, a state in the life of the love affair.

(Salzman-Mitchell 2008, 44)

This reading of *Amores* 1.5 tells an interesting story about the fragmented narrativity of Roman love elegy, and, in its emphasis upon the inscription of a narrative program upon the naked body of the elegiac *puella*, it is particularly telling in regards to the narrativity of the Sulpicia poems. In this elegiac corpus, as many critics have noted (Currie 1983; Hinds 1987; Lowe 1988; Keith 1997 and 2006; Flaschenriem 1999; Hallett 2006), the innovative self representation of the elegiac *puella* involves a nuanced “rhetoric of disclosure” – a narrative of striptease (on the erotic pleasure of reading such narratives see Brooks 1984, and Kennedy 2008, 25–27). In this light it is significant that the opening poem of the Sulpicia sequence (3.8) introduces the reader to a “Sulpicia” who is dressed to please:

Sulpicia est tibi culta tuis, Mars magne, kalendis:
spectatum e caelo, si sapis, ipse veni.
hoc Venus ignoscet. at tu, violente, caveto
ne tibi miranti turpiter arma cadant.

Sulpicia is dressed for you on your Kalends, great Mars.
If you're wise, come down from heaven just to see her.
Venus will turn a blind eye. But, as rough as you are, take care;
it would be a shame to drop your weapons in your amazement.

In this programmatic poem, the intertextual echoes of Tibullus 1.9, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and of Propertius 1.2 and 4.5, are unmistakable and remind us that, as an elegiac *puella*, Sulpicia here takes her place within a generic tradition as a character within a story whose plot is already well-known to her readers. Indeed, pictured here with her hair both up *and* down (3.8.9f), clothed in richly dyed Tyrian robes *and* in the pure white dress befitting a *candida puella* (3.8.11f), “Sulpicia” enters the elegiac storyworld dressed and ready both to replay and to replace the parts of Delia, Cynthia and Corinna: she is the only one of these elegiac *puellae* worthy of the role (3.8.15), according to the narrator of this poem. So, when in the first poem of the second sequence (3.13), Sulpicia employs the vocabulary of dressing (*texisse* – 3.13.1) and undressing (*nudasse* – 3.13.2) as metaphors for the programmatic processes of concealment and disclosure required by the narrative of her “joys” (her *amores*), we anticipate that this narrative will follow along familiar elegiac storylines. It is soon “revealed,” however, that the story of Sulpicia's elegies will enact a very different striptease to the kind characteristically played out in Roman love elegy, and by the time her readers complete the narrative cycle played out across elegies 3.8–18, Sulpicia will have transformed both herself and her storytelling mode, moving from the status of viewed object to narrating subject.

In elegy 3.16, in which Sulpicia berates her lover for his infidelity with a “common whore,” the lowly status of her rival *puella* is marked by a reference to the masculine costume that she wears – the toga (3.16.3). Yet, as Flaschenriem has noticed, rather than emphasizing the social distinction between them, Sulpicia's reference to the prostitute's toga reminds us that Sulpicia herself, in adopting the traditionally masculine role of

elegiac poet-narrator, figuratively wears the toga too: here, then, she “is simultaneously disguised in male garb, and clothed in the provocative attire of the elegiac *puella*” (Flaschenriem 1999, 48); she is simultaneously clothed in the respectability afforded by her status as the daughter of Servius Sulpicius (3.16.4), and exposed in the figurative prostitution that attends the narrative of her – now public – sexual relationship with Cerinthus. For Sulpicia, as for Ovid, it seems, showing the female body provides a figure for the telling of elegiac stories. So, according to Flaschenriem (1999, 38, emphasis mine):

The fictions of erotic elegy – including its programmatic fictions – are organized around a carefully regulated display of the female body. Sulpicia alludes to this convention in the opening couplet of 3.13, but subverts its procedures, translating the image of the unclothed *puella* into a figure of speech. What will be revealed here is not a woman’s body, but the *story* of her love.

The poetic striptease that Sulpicia performs in and across her elegies, then, shows us the story of her love. And, through the same mimetic mode of (non)narration, it shows us too the story of Roman love elegy and its narrativity.

Ending

Let me end as I began by telling a very short story – a summary of the story I have been attempting to tell here about the uneasy relationship between Roman love elegy and narrative. Narrativity in Roman love elegy operates across various telescoping levels, the narratological issues pertaining to one level also pertaining to each of the others. First, narrativity operates within and across the self-contained, end-stopped metrical unit of the elegiac couplet (identifiable here as the primary narrative unit of elegiac storytelling), each exquisitely formed distich telling its own short story or a fragment of a larger one: Catullus’ *odi et amo* poem (85) – perhaps the most famous of all elegiac couplets – nicely illustrates this aspect of the narrativity of Roman love elegy in its briefest and most fragmentary form. Next, stories are told within and across individual elegies (usually the secondary narrative unit in Roman love elegy), where a single poem can be read as telling its own short story or as supplying a discrete chapter set within a larger narrative: as demonstrated by the elegiac diptych in the Sulpicia poems (3.14–15), which individually, as a pair, or as a chapter in the wider “story of Sulpicia and Cerinthus” tell part of a fragmented love story. Then, stories are told in and across books (the tertiary elegiac narrative unit) and across the collections of individual poems or narrative fragments that they contain, single elegies and episodes connected not by chronology or continuity of action but by the continuity of agents and voice: the recurring first-person narration and the names Sulpicia and Cerinthus map a continuous narrative arc across poems 3.8–18 of the *Corpus Tibullianum* that in some readings even stretches back to incorporate poems in the main body of the text, seeing references to a character named “Cornutus” in Tibullus 2.2 and 2.3 as allusions to the metrically equivalent pseudonym “Cerinthus” and so interpreting these poems as “further fragments of the affair” (Skoie 2008, 246; see also Stevenson 2005, 37f). Finally, stories are told in and across literary traditions and genres (the fourth

and largest elegiac unit of narrative): Sulpicia can appeal to the epic narratives involving Helen and Dido and incorporate their stories into her own. And, in the final analysis, the story of Sulpicia and Cerinthus represents just one variation of the well-known “master plot” of Roman love elegy, an intertextual narrative which, in its fragmented retelling of the traditional elegiac plot is, I would suggest, as novel as it is novel-like.

FURTHER READING

Mieke Bal's *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* and Gerald Prince's *Dictionary of Narratology* provide accessible starting points for anyone interested in developing their understanding of narrative theory, while Peter Brooks' *Reading for the Plot* and *Psychoanalysis and Storytelling* are slightly tougher reading but worth the effort for the insights they offer into the sort of narratives that Roman love elegy (and its readers) tell. I have tried as far as possible to limit the use of narratological terminology in my essay (not least of all because different terms can connote different meanings: “story,” for example, can refer to what Russian Formalist narratologists call the “fabula” or it can stand as a synonym for “narrative”) but there are numerous handbooks, companions, and encyclopedias that provide helpful guides to the application of both narratological terminology and theory, among the best of which are H. Porter Abbott's *Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*; Susana Onega and José Landa's *Narratology: An Introduction*; James Phelan and Peter Rabinowitz's *Blackwell Companion to Narrative Theory*; David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan's *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*; and David Herman and Bart Vervaeck's *Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. Michaela Janan's monograph, “*When the Lamp is Shattered*”: *Desire and Narrative in Catullus*, Alessandro Barchiesi's *Speaking Volumes: Narrative and Intertext in Ovid and Other Latin Poets*, and Michèle Lowrie's work on *Horace's Narrative Odes* offer three sparkling examples of the innovative readings of Roman love poetry that can be released using the tools of narratology. On narrative in Roman love elegy more specifically, the essays edited by Genevieve Liveley and Patricia Salzman-Mitchell in *Latin Elegy and Narratology: Fragments of Story* examine aspects of narrativity in the poetry of Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid and Sulpicia, while the Fall 2010 edition of *Helios* is specifically dedicated to issues of narrative and storytelling in Latin love elegy.

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CHAPTER 26

The Gaze and the Elegiac Imaginary

David Fredrick

si nescis, oculi sunt in amore duces.

In case you didn't know, eyes are the leaders in love.
(Propertius 2.15.12)

Whether or not eyes really are the leaders in love, they are emphatically central to Roman elegy. The genre returns again and again to descriptions of the desirable qualities of the *puella*, constructing extended moments of visual fascination around her eyes, hair, lips, fingertips, skin, feet. Alternatively, elegy also includes less frequent but no less striking images of the damaged *puella*, scratched, bitten, or bruised by the narrator as the result of her resistance or infidelity. In its movement between the *puella* as an idealized collection of parts and the *puella* as the object of violence, elegy seems to invite the application of gaze theory, in particular Laura Mulvey's concepts of fetishistic scopophilia and sadistic voyeurism (Mulvey 1989). But while these concepts are useful, it is obvious that elegy was not composed to be read or heard in American movie theaters, but "somewhere" in Augustan Rome. As Micaela Janan demonstrates in this volume, the application of Lacanian psychoanalysis to elegy can be fruitful indeed. This piece is perhaps more narrow in scope and intends to provide a specific political context for the themes of the gaze and the imaginary in elegy, related to the larger deployment of images in the Augustan period. The frustrations and contradictions of Augustan imagery reflect the frustrations and contradictions that mark the construction of the *puella* as a visual object. To adapt Paul Zanker, this chapter explores through elegy the power and fragility of the imaginary in the age of Augustus.

The indefiniteness of “somewhere” in Augustan Rome is important. As the negative strategy of literary *recusatio* is essential to elegy’s self-definition as not epic, it also practices a kind of spatial *recusatio*, a hide-and-seek with the heroic topography of Augustan Rome. With some significant exceptions, most poems unfold in a hazy other-world of doorsteps, streets, dinner parties, and bedrooms with little sustained sense of place, easier to define not by where they are but by where they are not: not the Forum, not a known elite house, not a named street, not this specific portico or that specific theater (but for an evaluation of Propertius’ relation to the Augustan city, see Welch 2005). In this respect elegy is “of” Rome, but not specifically “in” it, and this illusion of a separate, if vaguely sketched, elegiac world contributes to the effect of the *puella* as not real. Indeed, Maria Wyke has argued that the *puella* has little or no grounding in real, living women, but serves as a metaphor for the alienation of the narrator from traditional Roman values, defined by competitive military and political achievement (Wyke 1987, 1989, 1994). There is an evident contradiction between forms of visual pleasure – scopophilia and voyeurism – that are strongly identified by Mulvey as being in the service of patriarchal masculinity, and Wyke’s argument for the “mistress as metaphor,” which suggests that the narrator has rejected Roman masculinity for the disempowered posture of *servitium amoris*. As Gold has pointed out, however, this passive pose can be read as ironic, and Fredrick argues that it is violated in several significant poems in which the *puella* is assaulted violently by the narrator (Gold 1993; Fredrick 2002). Consequently this chapter will maintain that both approaches are valuable and that the apparent contradiction between them reflects a betrayal at the heart of elegy, which in turn reflects an instability that is fundamental to the Augustan use of images.

“Cynthia first took me with her eyes ... ”

The theme of visual fascination is announced in the first line of Propertius’ *Monobiblos*: *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis* (“Cynthia first took me with her eyes, to my anguish,” Prop. 1.1.1). The following two poems concentrate this theme around Cynthia’s body as an idealized aesthetic object; in poem 2, this takes the form of a conceit that it needs no further adornment – no elaborate hairdo, no Coan silks, or Orontean myrrh. Rather, there’s no possible improvement to her figure, because “naked Love does not love one who contrives beauty” (*nudus Amor formae non amat artificem*, 1.2.9). Of course, this line itself is highly contrived, and is followed by six polished lines on the beauty of unadorned nature, highlighted by the golden line 13: *litora nativis persuadent picta lapillis* (“shores painted with their own natural pebbles are seductive ... ”). A sequence of recondite comparisons to the unalloyed beauty of mythological heroines follows in lines 15–20, concluding with the observation, “But their faces weren’t marred with any gems and had the kind of color you find in the paintings of Apelles” (“sed facies aderat nullis obnoxia gemmis / qualis Apelleis est color in tabulis,” Prop. 1.2.21–22). Like the golden line on the “natural” beauty of the shore, the declaration that the “natural” color of these heroines is just like what you see in a painted masterpiece underscores that the beauty Cynthia need not adorn is itself constructed through *ars*. Love

may be *nudus*, but Cynthia's beauty definitely is not, and the poem's fiction of stripping away Cynthia's artifice to reveal her beauty bare is recognizably scopophilic, even though we get little direct description of Cynthia's body.

"Scopophilic" here is intended primarily in Mulvey's sense of visual fascination with the female body presented as an iconic collection of parts. In traditional Hollywood cinema, this refers to those moments in which narrative progress is halted and the camera moves over the desirable pieces of the actress' face and body, usually as a series of close-ups with little visual depth.

The presence of woman is an indispensable element of spectacle in normal narrative film, yet her visual presence tends to work against the development of a story-line, to freeze the flow of action in moments of erotic contemplation...Similarly, conventional close-ups of legs (Dietrich, for instance) or a face (Garbo) integrate into the narrative a different mode of eroticism. One part of a fragmented body destroys the Renaissance space, the illusion of depth demanded by the narrative; it gives flatness, the quality of a cut-out or icon, rather than verisimilitude, to the screen.

(Mulvey 1989, 19–20)

Again, while poem 1.2 does not feature direct description of Cynthia's features, it does adhere to the logic of piece-by-piece description, first in the movement from ornamented hair to Coan silk to Orontean myrrh, then in the list of beautiful natural bits: colors, ivy, wild strawberries, streams, pebbles on the beach, and bird song. This is followed by the list of naturally beautiful heroines from myth: Phoebe, Hilaira, Evenus' daughter, Hippodameia. Again, narrative is essentially halted as the poem instructs Cynthia about her own unspoiled charms by comparison to the catalog of beautiful nature and naturally beautiful mythological women.

The next poem, 1.3, is more directly and explicitly scopophilic. It begins with a series of comparisons of the sleeping Cynthia, discovered by the poet when he returns after a late night of drinking: to Ariadne asleep on the beach, abandoned by Theseus; Andromeda asleep after being freed from her chains; and a Thracian Maenad collapsed in slumber after a night of dancing. Ariadne, Andromeda, and sleeping Maenads are common in Pompeian wall painting, usually exposed to the gaze of an internal male onlooker – Theseus, Perseus, Dionysus, satyrs (Fredrick 1995). Consequently this particular set of comparisons strongly associates the poet's gaze at Cynthia with arrested moments of erotic contemplation in Roman art. Although love and wine, two powerful gods, urge the narrator to embrace her and kiss her, he fears the abuse of her tongue if he should wake her. So, instead he "holds his eyes fixed intently on her, like Argus at the unfamiliar horns of Io, Inachus' daughter" ("sed sic intentis haerebam fixus ocellis, / Argus ut ignotis cornibus Inachidos," Prop. 1.3.19–20). The comparison to Argus – another fairly common figure in Pompeian painting – multiplies and intensifies the gaze of the narrator, as Argus had one hundred eyes that took turns resting and gazing at Io after she was transformed into a cow (Ovid *Met.* 1.622–631). However, this comparison also implies the eventual outcome of the poem. Just as Argus was lulled to sleep and beheaded by Mercury, so too the vulnerability of the narrator's gaze will be exposed as he is caught looking and punished (at least verbally) by Cynthia.

For the moment, however, the narrative of the poem remains arrested, while the narrator puts garlands on the sleeping Cynthia, arranges her hair, gives her apples, and finally bestows “every kind of gift on her ungrateful slumber” (*omniaque ingrato largibar munera somno*, Prop. 1.3.25). Whenever Cynthia moves or sighs, the narrator is stunned with fear, “lest some dream brings you unaccustomed terrors, or some man compels you unwilling to be his” (“ne qua tibi insolitos portarent visa timores, / neve quis invitam cogeret esse suam,” Prop. 1.3.29–30). Since scopophilic pleasure depends on the presentation of the woman as icon, a collection of perfect parts, the imagined rival here points to a basic violation of elegy’s scopophilic fantasy: the *puella* may be beautiful, but she is unfaithful. In the scenario projected onto her in these lines, the *puella* is unwilling, but the rival is in fact a necessary structural feature of the genre, since he puts in motion the numerous blocking strategies of the genre, holding the narrator apart from the *puella*. At the same time, the jealousy provoked by the rival drives the second kind of visual pleasure in elegy, a suspicious gaze that investigates and interrogates the *puella*. This investigating gaze stands in contrast to elegy’s moments of frozen erotic contemplation, and it is closely aligned with Mulvey’s concept of sadistic voyeurism. In Propertius 1.3, however, the imagined rival only implies what will be the persistent structure of elegy: the movement between arrested visual fascination and jealous investigation of the *puella*. As the narrator watches Cynthia dream, the poem hovers between the two kinds of visual pleasure, between showering gifts fetishistically on her sleeping form and imagining the violation betrayed by her dreams, until, “running across the windows opposite, the busy-body moon with its lingering light, opened her slumbering eyes with its gentle beams” (“donec diversas praecurrens luna fenestras, / luna moraturis sedula luminibus, / compositos levibus radiis patefecit ocellos,” Prop. 1.3.31–33).

Now wide awake, Cynthia turns the gaze around on the narrator, abruptly extinguishing his visual command with a torrent of accusations: he has been with another lover, abandoning her to her weaving and singing until she, imagining him in the arms of another woman, finally fell asleep. It is difficult not to see here yet another, now more subtle, reference to a myth popular in Roman visual art. As the moon sympathetically plays across Cynthia’s eyes and draws them open to catch the narrator looking, there is a very strong temptation to see Actaeon, caught looking by Diana and punished by being torn apart by his own dogs. Humorously enough, the dogs here have been replaced by the rough edge of Cynthia’s tongue, but all the same the progress from objectification of the sleeping woman in the opening set of comparisons (Ariadne, Andromeda, the Maenad), to the myth of Argus gazing at Io, to the final implicit, unnamed myth that turns this visual pleasure around into vulnerability, seems clear. As Verity Platt has observed, the myth of Actaeon embodies a fundamental danger in Roman visual culture during the imperial period, as “the gaze holds both power and danger for him who beholds, and him who is beheld. The meeting of gazes can be an occasion fraught with anxiety about the confrontation of Self and Other and the potential for the onset of desire, shame, violence and the loss of autonomy” (Platt 2002, 87). Granting, with Wyke, that Cynthia is not real but rather a *scripta puella*, a woman inscribed as political metaphor, this moment in Propertius 1.3 when her gaze meets that of the narrator is indeed fraught with serious political anxiety, not least because the question of autonomy at stake has resonance both broadly Lacanian and more immediately Augustan.

The Elegiac Imaginary

On the one hand, then, Propertius 1.3 can serve as a model for a type of objectifying gaze that is very common in elegy. Given the strategy of piece-by-piece description and the interest in iconic perfection, we can apply Mulvey's term "fetishistic scopophilia," as long as we keep in mind that the goal of this gaze in elegy does not match the goal Mulvey attributes to this gaze in cinema, namely to promote the male viewer's pleasure by providing one avenue of escape from castration anxiety. For Mulvey, narrative cinema is fundamentally conservative while Augustan elegy arguably has a much greater interest in exploring male vulnerability. This is true despite the existence of "classic" scopophilia poems, like Ovid *Am.* 1.5, that do seem to serve this pleasure for the male reader if read apart from the rest of the corpus. In this poem, the narrator settles down for a nap in the half-light of a drowsy summer afternoon, when suddenly Corinna appears ("ecce, Corinna venit," *Am.* 1.5.9), covered in an unbound tunic, her hair parted around her white neck like Semiramis or Lais. They briefly struggle, and the narrator tears away her tunic, exposing her nude form:

ut stetit ante oculos posito velamine nostros,
 in toto nusquam corpore menda fuit.
 quos umeros, quales vidi tetigique lacertos!
 forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi!
 quam castigato planus sub pectore venter!
 quantum et quale latus! quam iuvenale femur!

As she stood before our eyes with her tunic cast aside,
 in her entire body there was not a single flaw.
 What shoulders, what arms I saw and I touched!
 The shape of those nipples, how fit to be squeezed!
 What a flat stomach underneath that disciplined breast!
 Her flank, just the right size and shape! What a youthful thigh!
 (Ovid *Am.* 1.5.17–22)

Having provided a catalog of fetishized ideal parts, the narrator remarks, "why should I list the details? I saw nothing that wasn't praiseworthy, and pressed her nude body to mine" ("singula quid referam? nil non laudabile vidi / et nudum pressi corpus ad usque meum," Ovid *Am.* 1.5.23–24). As noted above, such piece-by-piece scopophilic passages are common in elegy, and if read independently, these passages would suggest that the genre is simply interested in rewarding an objectifying male gaze, as Mulvey argues for cinema. However, things are not that simple, first because these scopophilic descriptive passages contribute directly to the larger aesthetic project of the genre, namely its self-definition as slender, pure, learned and Callimachean, and second because this project is consistently violated by the other kind of gaze in elegy, which we might (again somewhat provisionally) describe, in Mulvey's terms, as "sadistic voyeurism." If scopophilia depends on flat space, narrative arrest, and piece-by-piece description, voyeurism does the opposite, moving the narrative forward by situating action in deep 3D space. As Mulvey famously put it:

... voyeurism, on the contrary, has associations with sadism: pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt (immediately associated with castration), asserting control and subjecting the guilty person through punishment or forgiveness. Sadism demands a story, depends on making something happen, forcing a change in another person, a battle of will and strength, victory/defeat, all occurring in a linear time with a beginning and an end. Fetishistic scopophilia, on the other hand, can exist outside linear time as the erotic instinct is focused on the look alone.

(Mulvey 1989, 21–22).

Elegy most definitely has a “story” to complement its frozen moments of erotic contemplation, and the essence of this story is separation from the *puella* due to a rival, thanks to whom the *puella* has barred her door, traveled to Baiae, or all the way to Illyria. As the narrator observes in Propertius 1.12,

tam multa illa meo divisa est milia lecto,
quantum Hypanis Veneto dissidet Eridano;
nec mihi consuetos amplexu nutrit amores
Cynthia, nec nostra dulcis in aure sonat.

she is distant from my bed by so many miles,
as many as separate Hypanis from Venetian Eridanus;
no longer does Cynthia nurture our accustomed love with her embraces,
nor does she sound sweetly in our ear.

(Prop. 1.12.3–6)

Separation due to a rival fuels jealousy, leading to episodes of violence against the *puella*. As has often been noticed, the language of lovemaking in elegy is commonly military (Cahoon 1988), and, while scenes of lovemaking are not frequent – the *amator* is far more often excluded than welcomed – when they happen they tend to be violent, including scratches, bites, hair-pulling, and beating. In the midst of a poem celebrating a night of passion with Cynthia, the narrator moves suddenly and disturbingly toward violence:

quod si pertendens animo vestita cubaris,
scissa veste meas experiere manus:
quin etiam, si me ulterius provexerit ira,
ostendes matri brachia laesa tuae.

Because if you lie there stubbornly with your clothes on,
With your dress torn open you will experience my hands:
What’s more, if anger will provoke me further,
you will show your bruised arms to your mother.

(Prop. 2.15.17–20)

Similarly, at the end of Tibullus 1.10, the lovemaking between the farmer and his wife at the end of the rural festival moves toward violence; the “wars of Venus heat up” (*sed Veneris tunc bella calent*, Tib.1.10.53) and the woman laments her torn hair and shattered doors, weeps at her bruised cheeks, while the man laments that his hands were so strong. All the while, “lascivious Love” (*lascivus Amor*) sits between them, and supplies evil words to their quarrel (Tib. 1.10.53–58). The violent lovemaking itself seems to

have transformed this rustic couple into *amator* and *puella*, and the narrator is prepared to offer them advice on the “proper” limits of elegiac violence:

a, lapis est ferrumque, suam quicumque puellam
verberat: e caelo deripit ille deos.
sit satis e membris tenuem rescindere vestem,
sit satis ornatus dissoluisse comae,
sit lacrimas movisse satis: quater ille beatus,
quo tenera irato flere puella potest.
sed manibus qui saevus erit, scutumque sudemque
is gerat et miti sit procul a Venere.

Ah, he is stone or iron, whoever beats his own girl:
he tears the gods right down from the sky.
Let it be enough to tear her thin dress from her limbs,
let it be enough to pull apart her elaborate hairdo,
let it be enough to move her to tears. That man is four times happy,
whose anger is able to make a tender girl cry.
But whoever rages with his fists, he should bear a shield
and spear, and he should be far from gentle Venus.

(Tib.1.10.59–66)

In their violence, these episodes contrast starkly with *recusatio*, which rejects epic violence and presents the poem / *puella* as perfected Callimachean text: as a *scripta puella*, the elegiac woman should represent the rejection of epic violence. But marked by the teeth, nails, and fists of the narrator, the *puella* becomes a kind of deformed text, *laesa* instead of *scripta*, and now more like the conquered victims of epic than the “natural” beauties of elegiac simile. Ovid specifically exploits the connection between sexual violence in elegy and epic, developing his assault on Corinna into a kind of faux triumph:

I nunc, magnificos victor molire triumphos,
cinge comam lauro votaue redde Iovi,
quaque tuos currus comitantum turba sequetur,
clamet, “io! forti victa puella viro est!”
ante eat effuso tristis captiva capillo,
si sinerent laesae, candida tota, genae.
aptius inpressis fuerat livere labellis
et collum blandi dentis habere notam.

Go now, victor, stage a magnificent triumph,
bind your head with laurel and give vows to Jupiter,
And let the crowd that throngs your chariot wheels
exclaim, “To! A girl has been beaten by a brave man!”
Let the captive girl go in front, sorrowful with her unbound hair,
All white, if her beaten cheeks would allow.
It would have been better for her to be bruised by the mark of my lips,
and for her neck to bear the mark of my seductive teeth.

(Ovid *Am.* 1.7.35–42)

The movement between erotic fascination and jealous anger is fundamental to elegy, structuring numerous poems in Propertius (e.g. 1.1–1.9, 1.11–1.16, 2.16–2.19, 2.24–2.26, 2.29–2.30, 2.32–2.34, 3.1–3.6, 3.10–3.14, 3.16–3.17, 3.19–3.20, 3.23–3.25) and Ovid (e.g. *Am.* 1.1–1.10, 1.14, 2.1, 2.5, 2.9–2.11, 2.16–2.19, 3.1–3.4, 3.7–3.8, 3.11–3.12, 3.14). However, this does not mean that the scopophilic and voyeuristic gazes have the same conservative effect that Mulvey analyzes for classic cinema. Traditional Hollywood cinema, according to Mulvey, downplays the evident contradictions between the two, in terms of narrative arrest, spatial depth, and the view of the female body as either iconically perfect (in parts, with the omission of her sexual difference) or essentially flawed and therefore in need of punishment or rescue. Cinema thus offers the male viewer two avenues of escape from castration anxiety, without allowing the conflict between these two avenues to rise to the conscious attention of the viewer.

The situation seems obviously different for elegy, since the first avenue, scopophilia, overlaps closely the explicit aesthetic agenda of the genre, while the second, voyeurism, seems to explicitly violate that agenda by realigning elegy with the rejected genre of epic. In 3.1, Propertius specifically balances his fine and polished muse against epics that would celebrate Rome's military expansion.

a valeat Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis!
 exactus tenui pumice versus eat,
 quo me Fama levat terra sublimis, et a me
 nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis,
 et mecum in curru parvi vectantur Amores,
 scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas.
 quid frustra missis in me certatis habenis?
 non datur ad Musas currere lata via.
 Multi, Roma, tuas laudes annalibus addent,
 qui finem imperii Bactra futura canent;
 sed, quod pace legas, opus hoc de monte Sororum
 detulit intacta pagina nostra via.

Ah, farewell to the man who would detain Phoebus in arms!
 Let the verse run along polished with light pumice,
 whereby Fame would lift me up from the earth, and the Muse
 born from me would triumph with garlanded horses,
 and Cupids would be borne along with me in our little chariot,
 a crowd of writers thronging my wheels.
 Why do you struggle against me in vain, reins let loose?
 You'll find no approach to the Muses riding down that broad road.
 Many, Rome, will add your praises to the cycles of the years,
 Poets who will sing of Bactria, the new outer limits of empire;
 But on a pure path down from the Sisters' mountain our page has brought
 this work, a thing you should read in the time of peace.

(Prop. 3.1.7–18)

And yet it is precisely this clear distinction between peaceful elegy and warlike epic that is undercut by violence between the *puella* and the narrator, disclosing that the fantasy of the unblemished *puella*, as a metaphor for the rarified Callimachean text, is always already lost. Rather than two avenues of escape from castration that essentially cooperate to

reinforce the pleasure of the male viewer/reader, what we seem to have instead is a profoundly contradictory genre, which on the one hand appears to rely on a variety of separative devices – closed doors, sea voyages, greedy bawds – in order to hold the *puella* at arms length as a visual object, and on the other hand a reaction against precisely these separative devices, focused as they are on the figure of the rival, which leads to “the wars of Venus,” contact too proximate and too violent. This contact leaves tell-tale marks that betray the *puella* as improperly ravaged by epic, rather than properly *scripta* through Callimachean poetics.

Mulvey’s scopophilic and voyeuristic gazes thus seem useful for understanding elegy, but the conservative relation she establishes between them is less so, aimed as it is at the visual pleasure of traditional Hollywood cinema (“conservative” in that traditional cinema, in Mulvey’s view, aims to safeguard the privileged position of the male viewer rather than exposing his vulnerability). It might be more helpful to reconsider here the Lacanian concept of the imaginary. Mulvey’s account of scopophilia leads to a certain amount of stress on the description of the *puella* as a collection of idealized fragments, and indeed like scopophilic moments in film these descriptions do depend on the omission of one part. As Richlin has observed, “the parts of her body that evoke desire in the poet form a sort of circle around the genitalia...it is as if there is a blank space in the middle of the woman” (Richlin 1983/1992, 47). Nonetheless it is clear that they aim to produce the impression of an idealized whole, suggesting that the Callimachean text, as represented by the *scripta puella*, is a kind of mirror-image for the narrator, an idealized Other body in relation to which the narrator is situated as subordinate. That is, the overlap of the *puella* as erotic object with the Callimachean page as aesthetic object eroticizes the latter through association with the *puella* as “perfect” female body, a perfect body/text which in turn functions as a mirror object for the narrator. This is distinctly different than what Mulvey describes for film:

As the spectator identifies with the main male protagonist, he projects his look onto that of his like, his screen surrogate, so that the power of the male protagonist as he controls events coincides with the active power of the erotic look, both giving a satisfying sense of omnipotence. A male movie star’s glamorous characteristics are thus not those of the erotic object of the gaze, but those of the more perfect, more complete, more powerful ideal ego conceived in the original moment of recognition in front of the mirror.

(Mulvey 1989, 20)

The imaginary of Hollywood cinema, which depends on the male viewer’s identification with the “more perfect, more complete, more powerful ideal ego” represented by the onscreen male lead, is thus not the imaginary of elegy, which depends instead on subordination to the idealized body of the *puella*, the erotic object of the gaze. As suggested by the analysis of Propertius 1.3 above, this position is masochistic, a pleasure Mulvey discounted for film, but which Gaylyn Studlar has suggested is primary to the Dietrich films of von Sternberg; on the basis of different thematic grounds, Carol Clover has made the same argument for slasher films.

It is also worth noting that the cinematic imaginary, in Mulvey’s analysis, becomes fairly stable and invulnerable; the contradictions involved are kept at bay, and so there is little risk in fetishizing the female lead and then identifying with the male lead as ideal

ego as he takes over the plot. The imaginary order in Lacan, however, is considerably more risky. First, it depends on alienation, on the separation between the self and the idealized other in the mirror, and second, the possibility of a coherent body/self offered by the mirror image is ultimately unrealizable, as the gap between the self and the mirror image cannot be closed (Lacan). The elegiac imaginary struggles openly with these limitations, as the *exclusus amator* finds himself separated from the *puella* by a seemingly infinite variety of delays and barriers; should these barriers appear to drop, however, the narrator moves uncomfortably into the role of phallic power, and the perfect textual surface of the *puella* is broken and lost.

The turn toward masculine power and authority represented by elegiac violence is never unproblematic for the genre; the banished world of traditional “epic” Roman values reasserts itself, but, unlike the role of the male lead in cinema, this is not the “ideal ego” for elegy. Rather, to assume this “more perfect, more complete, more powerful” masculinity is to lose the *puella* and violate the aesthetic ideals central to the genre. Nonetheless, this violation is built into the elegiac imaginary, an always present return path to Roman masculinity that discloses the reciprocal relation between the elegiac imaginary and the wider Augustan use of images.

Reading the World Away

It has always seemed that the elegiac *puella* was the antithesis of mainstream Augustan imagery, the “not” to the Forum of Augustus, the Ara Pacis, and the military triumph. Hence Maria Wyke has argued that the mistress was a metaphor, not “real” but rather a literary symbol that measured the separation of the narrator from traditional Roman values like military service, political success, and reproduction of the family through legitimate marriage. And yet the violence in elegy suggests that the two – the elegiac imaginary and Augustan imagery – might not be hermetically sealed, one from the other. As Paul Zanker has shown, Augustus organized an unprecedented array of imagery to “sell” the regime, from the sobriety of Third-Style wall painting to marble temple façades to images of himself in pious sacrificial mode, often attended by members of his family looking dutiful. It does seem that these images promote precisely what elegy attacks: the restoration of Roman piety and discipline, renewed empire stretching to the edges of the known world, a golden age of renewed morality focused on marriage. Of Augustus’ ambition to recapture the lost standards of Crassus, Propertius’ narrator remarks,

ipsa tuam serva prolem, Venus: hoc sit in aevum,
cernis ab Aenea quod superesse caput.
praeda sit haec illis, quorum meruere labores:
mi sat erit Sacra plaudere posse Via.

You yourself preserve your offspring, Venus, and may that blessed head
so evidently descended from Aeneas be safe for the ages.
May the spoils belong to those whose labor has earned them:
it’s enough for me to give my applause as they pass on the Sacred Way.

(Prop. 3.4.19–22)

This is another sort of *recusatio*, as the narrator gives lip service to an Augustan triumph while refusing any meaningful military or political participation. Indeed, he prays that the day may come when he may see Caesar's chariot laden with spoils, gaze at the names of the captured cities, the weapons and leaders of the enemy – all while “resting in the lap of my dear *puella*” (*inque sinu carae nixus ... puellae*, Prop. 3.4.15).

And yet ... the narrator, through his violence against the *puella*, ends up sliding toward the role of aggressive Roman masculinity, with the *puella* in the role of the conquered Other (see Buchan on the elision of the Ovidian *amator* with the Augustan *imperator*). Similarly, the *puella* herself may have more in common with Augustan imagery than first meets the eye. Crucial to both is a strategy of omission which assembles a collection of idealized fragments into the fantasy of a coherent whole; if the scopophilic look in elegy circles around “the blank space in the middle of the woman” (Richlin 1983/1992, 47), then Augustan imagery is similarly compelled to circle around and disavow certain things: the ugly history of the Second Triumvirate that brought Octavian to power, the proscriptions, land confiscations, the battles of Perugia and Mutina.

A monument like the Ara Pacis, then, represents an extraordinary fetishizing of history. It moves seamlessly from earliest Roman legend (Aeneas sacrificing to the Penates, with the sow and piglets, the Lupercal), to a golden age, the timeless present, with the fecundity of Italy and the stability of Rome. On the north side of the upper zone, the procession of senators moves toward the sacrifice at the altar; on the south side are Augustus and Agrippa, attended by the imperial family. The monument constructs a neat circle between the Augustan present and Rome's earliest past, and an image of frictionless harmony between the senatorial order and the imperial family. And yet the Augustan principate was itself perceived in much more negative terms by many in the senatorial order, as the “Roman revolution” that ushered in the principate had been bloody indeed (Syme 1956). As Trevor Fear has noted, “Tacitus referred to the Augustan peace as a *pax cruenta*, and Seneca the Younger remarked that Augustus' *clementia* was in reality a form of ‘exhausted cruelty’” (Fear 2000, 235; Tac. *Ann.* 1.10; Sen. *De Clementia* 11). Finally, the illusion of balance between Senate and *princeps* is misleading at best, and it disguises the real extent and past brutality of Augustus' power.

Given these omissions, it is not surprising that the Ara Pacis abounds in details that are at the same time persuasive and hollow. Magistrates advance attended by lictors, the *flamines* converse, their *apices* lashed under their chins, the priests have veiled their heads in their togas, others carry incense boxes and jugs. Every detail of “correct” sacrifice seems to be observed and yet, as Zanker notes,

It was typical of the innovations brought about by Augustan state religion that the annual sacrifice to the Pax Augusta at the Ara Pacis was entrusted not to a single college, but to officials of all the major priesthoods, including the Vestal Virgins (*Res Gestae* 12). Previously, the individual priesthoods had performed only those functions specifically assigned to them, sometimes in doing so also enjoying considerable political influence ... Under Augustus, however, the various colleges acted more often in conjunction, creating an impressive outward appearance but obscuring the fact that their common responsibilities now consisted only in prayers and otherwise allowed them hardly any influence.

(Zanker 1990, 121)



Figure 26.1 Rome, Ara Pacis, Antonia minor with Drusus maior and their children; behind, other members of the imperial house. From P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (1990) figure 124, p. 159. (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Rom).

To complement the illusion of harmonious religious and political cooperation, the Ara Pacis also includes numerous pointers to emotional engagement and “realism,” in the heads turned in conversation, in the children tugging at the hems of the adults, or clutching their hands, and down in the vegetal zone, lizards darting among the leaves, birds feeding the young in their nests. And yet the Ara Pacis retains precisely that “flatness, the quality of a cut-out or icon rather than verisimilitude” (Mulvey 1989, 20; Figure 26.1), as the accretion of beautiful naturalizing details surrounds an alienating political reality that the monument will only whisper – that this is an image of Rome you cannot possess, that you, the viewer, must share this perfected icon with a far more powerful rival.

In Propertius 2.31, the narrator is detained from his *puella* by a competing aesthetic construct: the “golden portico of Phoebus has been opened by great Caesar” (*aurea Phoebi / porticus a magno Caesare aperta fuit*, Prop. 2.31.1–2). There follows an account of Augustus’ Apolline complex on the Palatine, an ecphrasis that unfolds, like so many descriptions of the *puella* herself, as a series of stunning fragments: Punic columns, among them the “female crowd” of statues of the Danaids, a temple rising in shining marble, a chariot of the Sun, engraved doors of Libyan ivory. At the altar are four oxen, apparently poised for sacrifice except that they are not real – rather, they are the work of

the sculptor Myron, “statues that seem to live” (*vivida signa*, Prop. 2.31.8). If we accept the original order of the lines, the poem concludes with the image of Apollo himself, “the Pythian god between his mother and his sister, in his flowing robe, chanting songs” (“deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem / Pythius in longa carmine veste sonat,” Prop. 2.31.15–16). Here the elegiac imaginary, with its *puella* of Callimachean proportions, meets its vast complement in the Augustan imagery machine, and at its center is Apollo as poet, a double for Augustus as the author of the Palatine complex, and at the same time the outsized reflection of the narrator, that “more perfect, more complete, more powerful ideal ego” with which the elegiac poet apparently cannot compete (Mulvey 1989, 20; for the emergence of an imperial panoptic gaze in 2.31 and 2.32, see Bowditch 2009). And yet as the oxen of Myron are not really alive, this Apollo is in fact silent, cannot really “chant song” (*sonat*), and so Augustan imagery, like the elegiac *puella*, is always betrayed as a compelling fiction.

FURTHER READING

For film theory and the gaze, the work of Mary Ann Doane, E. Ann Kaplan, and Kaja Silverman is particularly helpful. For issues of gender and the gaze specifically in classics and ancient art, the work of John Clarke, Jaś Elsner, Natalie Kampen, Barbara Kellum, Helen Morales, Verity Platt, Alison Sharrock, and Caroline Vout is an excellent place to start. For issues of gender, power, and male anxiety in Roman elegy, see the work of Ellen Oliensis, Alison Keith, William Fitzgerald, and Micaela Janan.

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PART VII

**Late Antique Elegy
and Reception**

CHAPTER 27

Reception of Elegy in Augustan and Post-Augustan Poetry

P. J. Davis

Love elegy is the characteristic poetic production of the first thirty years of Augustan rule, for while that period produced one outstanding epicist and one exceptional lyric poet, it produced no fewer than four love elegists: Gallus, Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid. And yet it would be possible to read the next hundred years of Roman literary history primarily as the story of the reception of Virgil's *Aeneid*. My aim in this chapter is to argue that, despite the *Aeneid*'s pre-eminence, engagement with all four elegists is an important aspect of Augustan and post-Augustan literature. I propose to concentrate on just five authors: Virgil, Horace, Seneca, Valerius Flaccus and Statius.

Gallus and Virgil's *Eclogues*

The story of the reception of Gallus' poetry is actually better known than the poetry itself. Before 1979 only one line, an elegant pentameter, could be read. In that year ten fragmentary verses, which seem to constitute "a sequence of separate four-line epigrams" (Hollis 2007, 242), were published. Although our knowledge of Gallus' work has increased (we now have more than five words), our understanding of his four books of erotic verse, apparently called *Amores* (*Loves*) (Servius on *Eclogue* 10.1) is still sorely deficient.

That Gallus was an important figure for subsequent love elegists is clear from references to Gallus and his mistress "Lycoris" in Propertius and Ovid. Ovid in particular views himself as Gallus' successor (*Tristia* 4.10.53–4). But the most significant evidence for engagement with Gallus' poetry is to be found not in the elegists, but in Virgil's *Eclogues* (published around 35 BCE), for the figure of Gallus plays a key role in *Eclogues* 6 and 10.

Eclogue 6 is a puzzling poem, incorporating as it does a reworking of a scene from Callimachus (Apollo and the poet), a description of the binding of the drunken monster Silenus, followed by a lengthy report of his song, a song which begins with the creation of the world and continues with a strange collection of mythological stories, including a ten-line account of the coronation of Gallus by Linus, a mythical shepherd-poet. As scholars point out (e.g. Clausen 1994, 174–8), what these sections seem to have in common is a concern with the nature of poetry.

Eclogue 6 begins with a refusal to sing of “kings and battles” (*reges et proelia*, *Ecl.* 6.3), a refusal presumably prompted by Varus’ request for a poem on the subject of his own military achievements (*Ecl.* 6.6–7). More important than the refusal, however, is the speaker’s assertion of his own poetic allegiances. First is a commitment to “Syracusan” (i.e. Theocritean pastoral) verse (*Ecl.* 6.1–2). Second is an allegiance to the ideals enunciated by Callimachus in his *Aitia* (*Beginnings*), the rejection of “heroes” as a subject for poetry (*Aitia* fr. 1.5) and the cultivation of the “slender” (*leptaleên*, *Aitia* fr. 1.24 / *deductum*, *Ecl.* 6.5) style.

Most of *Eclogue 6*, however, is taken up with the song of Silenus (31–81), a song which encompasses an account of the creation of the world in quasi-philosophical language (31–40) and a sequence of mythological events (41–63, 74–81): the re-creation of humankind by Pyrrha and Deucalion after the flood, the rule of Saturn, Prometheus’ theft of fire and punishment, the loss of Hercules’ boyfriend Hylas, Pasiphae’s love for the bull, Atalanta’s race, the metamorphosis of Phaethon’s sisters and the stories of Scylla and Philomela. It is into this mythological sequence that the poet inserts the consecration of Gallus as a poetic successor of Hesiod (64–73).

Two questions arise. First, how does Silenus’ song relate to the poetic creed with which the poem begins? Second, what is the connection between Gallus and the myths that surround him?

Let’s take the first question first. One obvious epithet to use of Silenus’ song is “learned”, for his account of creation owes much to earlier philosophical poetry (Empedocles, Lucretius), while the sequence of myths is related in a manner that is both allusive and enigmatic. This is a song that demands of its readers both knowledge and ingenuity in the manner of Alexandrian poetry, the poetry of Theocritus, Callimachus and Apollonius of Rhodes.

What then of Gallus? Gallus is introduced as wandering close by the stream of Permessus: *tum canit, errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum* (6.64). Permessus, a stream flowing down Mount Helicon, is usually understood as being associated with love elegy (at least that is how Propertius [2.10.25–6] seems to have interpreted this passage). Gallus is then led by one of the Muses and initiated by Linus into the tradition of Hesiodic song:

hos tibi dant calamos (en accipe) Musae,
Asraeo quos ante seni, quibus ille solebat
cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos.
his tibi Grynei nemoris dicatur origo,
ne quis sit lucus quo se plus iactet Apollo.
(Virg. *Ecl.* 6.69–73)

The Muses give you these reeds (look, take them), which they once gave to the aged Ascræan (i.e. Hesiod), with which he used to draw down unbending ash trees from the hills

with slender song. With these tell the origins of the Grynean wood, so that there might be no grove in which Apollo glories more.

(This and all subsequent translations are my own.)

These lines suggest that Gallus had already written an aetiological poem, in the manner of Callimachus, on the subject of Apollo's oracle at Grynium in Asia Minor. This seems to be confirmed by Servius' claim (on *Ecl.* 6.72) that Gallus had "translated" a poem of Euphorion on the subject. Gallus then is an appropriate figure for Silenus' song, for he is embedded in a poem of the kind that he himself wrote or "translated". *Eclogue* 6 celebrates Gallus' conversion from erotic elegist into aetiological poet.

But if *Eclogue* 6 primarily concerns Gallus as an author of learned poetry in the Alexandrian manner, *Eclogue* 10 is very much concerned with Gallus as the author of love elegies. Indeed Servius (on *Ecl.* 10.46) says that "these are all verses of Gallus, transferred from his poems."

How then does Virgil represent the elegiac poet and his poetry? First, as scholars have pointed out (e.g. Putnam 1970, 347; Conte 1986, 104; Clausen 1994, 288), he presents Gallus in a decidedly pastoral context, for the Roman elegist re-enacts the role played by Daphnis in Thyrsis' song in the first of Theocritus' *Idylls*. The general circumstances of Daphnis and Gallus are similar, for in both cases the central character is unhappy in love (*duserôs*, *Id.* 1.85 / *sollicitos ... amores*, *Ecl.* 10.6), is visited by figures from the pastoral world (*Id.* 1.80–1 / *Ecl.* 10.16, 19–20) and by a divinity (Aphrodite *Id.* 1.95 / Apollo *Ecl.* 10.21) and is mourned by the natural world (*Id.* 1.71–2, 74–5 / *Ecl.* 10.13–15).

There are, however, major differences. First, Daphnis' love is unhappy because he chooses to resist his passion for a girl who seeks him (*Id.* 1.82–3), while Gallus is distressed because his mistress, Lycoris, has abandoned him for another (*Ecl.* 10.22–3, 46–8). Second, while the cattle mourn for Daphnis (*Id.* 1.74–5), the sheep merely stand around in Gallus' presence (*Ecl.* 10.16). Indeed, the *Eclogue*-poet advises Gallus not to be embarrassed by their being there (*Ecl.* 10.16–17). Third, Daphnis persists in his resistance and so dies (*Id.* 1.135), while Gallus finally chooses to succumb (*Ecl.* 10.69: *et nos cedamus Amori*, "Let us also yield to Love"). Thus *Eclogue* 10 places the elegist in the pastoral world only to highlight the differences between Daphnis and Gallus, to underline the opposition between pastoral and elegy.

As in *Eclogue* 6, the prospect of the elegist's conversion to a different kind of poetry is raised, for Gallus imagines the shepherds' pipe (*uestra ... fistula*) singing his loves / Loves (*amores / Amores*, 10.34) and envisions himself as a herdsman with rustic lovers or attendants. Indeed he dreams up a major writing project: "ibo et Chalcidico quae sunt mihi condita uersu / carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor auena", "I will go and set to music on the Sicilian shepherd's stalk those songs I composed in Chalcidic verse" *Ecl.* 10.50–1). As Servius explains (on *Ecl.* 10.50), Gallus here proposes to rewrite his previous works, works which took Euphorion as their model, in the manner of Theocritus: he will become a pastoral poet.

In the end, however, the conversion fails, for Gallus rejects all that is central to the pastoral genre: the woodland nymphs, forests and song itself (10.62–3). It is telling that he continues to conceive of love in elegiac terms, as *furor* or "frenzy" (10.38, 60; cf. Propertius 1.1.7, 1.4.11 etc.), a term used nowhere else in the *Eclogues*. Indeed he aligns

himself with those military values (*insanus amor duri ... Martis*, “crazy love of harsh Mars,” 10.44) that so devastate the pastoral world of *Eclogue* 1 (70–2).

Although *Eclogue* 10, and so the whole collection, closes with Virgil’s love for Gallus (*amor* 10.73), the opposition between elegy and pastoral and the values that they represent, remains unresolved.

Tibullus and Horace’s *Odes*

For the poet of the *Odes* (published in 23 BCE), love elegy was an established genre. Gallus’ *Amores* must have appeared by the mid-thirties; Propertius’ first two books are reckoned to have appeared around 29 and 26, while Tibullus’ first book is commonly dated to around 27 or earlier (for persuasive arguments in favor of 29 see Knox 2005). Hence it is not surprising that when Horace writes of love he responds to the dominant form of contemporary poetry. Indeed, in *c.* 1.33 he actually addresses Tibullus: *Albi, ne doleas plus nimio* (“Albius, don’t feel pain more than too much”).

How then does Horace’s representation of love respond to that of the elegists generally and of Tibullus in particular? Let’s consider *c.* 1.33:

Albi, ne doleas plus nimio memor
immitis Glycerae, neu miserabilis
decantes elegos, cur tibi iunior
laesa praeniteat fide.
insignem tenui fronte Lycorida
Cyri torret amor, Cyrus in asperam
declinat Pholoen; sed prius Apulis
iungentur capreae lupis,
quam turpi Pholoe peccet adultero.
sic uisum Veneri, cui placet imparis
formas atque animos sub iuga aenea
saeuo mittere cum ioco.
ipsum me melior cum peteret Venus,
grata detinuit compede Myrtale
libertina, fretis acrior Hadriae
curuantis Calabros sinus.

Albius, don’t feel pain more than too much when you recall bitter Glycera, and do not drone your wretched elegies, asking why she breaks her promises, why a younger man shines with superior brightness to you. Love for Cyrus burns Lycoris, outstanding for her slender brow, Cyrus swerves towards harsh Pholoe; but she-goats will sooner mate with Apulian wolves, than Pholoe will sin with a base adulterer. This is the law of Venus, who, as a cruel joke, delights in sending unequal bodies and minds beneath the bronze yoke. When a better mistress sought me, Myrtale held me prisoner with her delightful fetters, a freedwoman, more tempestuous than the Adriatic’s waves which curve Calabria’s gulfs.

This poem begins by invoking love elegy’s central trope: the lover suffers pain (*dolor*: Tib. 1.2.1, 1.5.38 etc; Prop. 1.1.38, 1.7.7 etc); he is wretched (*miser*: Tib. 1.2.88, 1.4.72 etc; Prop. 1.1.1, 1.5.5 etc). Here Tibullus is advised not to feel excessive pain

(*ne doleas*). On the other hand his elegies are said to be *miserabilis*, “wretched”, a word that suggests the lover’s plight, but also one that implies that these are bad poems. The lyric poet also claims that lovers and their mistresses are unequal or mismatched (*imparis*). This too is fundamental to elegiac discourse. Thus Tibullus uses the language of captivity and slavery of the lover’s relationship to his mistress: *me retinent uinctum formosae uincla puellae* (“A lovely girl’s chains hold me in bondage” 1.1.55); *non saeva recuso / uerbera, detrecto non ego uincla pedum* (“I do not refuse savage blows, I do not recoil from fettered feet” 1.6.38). Propertius is even more explicit, speaking his enslavement to Cynthia (1.4.4, 1.5.19 etc). We might also add that Horace’s speaker characterizes his own relationship with Myrtales in precisely this same language, for he too was a prisoner, shackled by the feet (*compede*).

Exploitation of elegiac tropes is in fact characteristic of Horace’s erotic poetry. Thus we have variations on the theme of the locked-out lover (the *paraclausithyron*) from all the extant elegists (Catullus *c.* 67 [an elegiac poem], Tibullus 1.2, Propertius 1.16 and, though probably later than *Odes* 1–3, Ovid, *Amores* 1.6). Horace gives us his *paraclausithyron* at *c.* 3.10. In *c.* 1.22 we find the notion that the lover is sacred and immune to every danger (cf. Tibullus 1.2.27–8: *quisquis amore tenetur, eat tutusque sacerque / qualibet: insidias non timuisse decet* [“Whoever is held by love, let him go safe and sacred wherever he pleases: he should not fear treachery”]; Prop. 2.27, 3.16.11–18; Ov. *Am.* 1.6.13–14). As the Tibullan lover describes the faithless mistress’s plight when she reaches old age and the pleasure young men take in mocking her (1.6.77–82), so Horace’s speaker brutally predicts the wretched fate of aging Lydia (*c.* 1.25).

But while listing parallels can establish the unsurprising truth that Horace responds to his literary context, it does not make clear the nature of that response. Particularly important is the tone of Horace’s treatment of elegy’s commonplaces. Consider 1.33 again. While most translators render *plus nimio* in the first line as “excessively” or “overmuch”, the phrase actually suggests that Albius is not just excessive, but that he exceeds excess. And, as commentators point out, the words *immitis Glycerae* embody a paradox, for Glycera means “Sweetie”: Albius loves “bitter Sweetie”. As we have already seen, *miserabilis* means “wretched” in two senses: the elegist is wretched and so are his elegies. And the use of *decantes* (“drone”) reinforces the sense of the speaker’s boredom and exasperation. We could perhaps characterize the tone of the opening stanza as combining both humor and disapproval.

That Horace should adopt such an approach to love elegy is perhaps to be expected in a poet who would describe himself in a second poem addressed to Tibullus as *Epicuri de grege porcum* (“a pig from Epicurus’ herd,” *Ep.* 1.4.16), for the Epicureans, most notably Lucretius at 4.1058–1287, disapproved of obsession with one beloved. As some have suggested (e.g. Boyle 1973, 173; Connor 1987, 192), the verb *declinat* (“swerves”) has Epicurean overtones, reminding us of Lucretius’ account of the random swerve of atoms (*declinare* 2.221, 250, 253, 259; *clinamen* 2.292) and implying perhaps that randomness is the cardinal rule in the world of love as well as physics.

Although Horace’s erotic odes may adopt a stance that is in general critical of elegy, they nevertheless vary greatly in tone. Consider *c.* 1.22, the poem whose central thesis is that lovers are immune to danger (as in Tib. 1.2.27–8). The poem’s opening lines in praise of the man “of upright life” (*integer uitae*) are solemn, so solemn that, as Eduard Fraenkel wrote (Fraenkel 1957, 184), “it was the custom at many German schools to

have the first stanza sung at funeral services in the Hall, to a tune not distinguishable from that of an ordinary church hymn.” It is not difficult to discern why it was not thought appropriate to go beyond the first two stanzas, because the third and fourth present what is said to be the poet’s own experience, an encounter with a wolf as he was singing of his girlfriend, while the fifth and sixth conclude that the poet will be safe in any hostile environment. In fact, the opening verses mislead, for their portentous character foreshadows not seriousness but humor. Thus the encounter with a wolf, which could have been the stuff of heroic legend, is entirely trivial. While wandering in the wood near his farm and singing of his girlfriend Lalage, the lover comes across a wolf of monstrous proportions, which runs away when it sees him. From this he infers that whether in lands of freezing cold or blistering heat he will still love “sweetly talking, sweetly laughing Lalage” (23). It turns out then that the man “of upright life” is not some somber statesman or philosopher but the poet-lover. In *c.* 1.22 an elegiac trope is played for laughs. But 1.22 does more than that, for, as Commager observes, the poem “exposes the insulated and insulating quality of elegiac love” (Commager 1962, 135).

Or consider Horace’s treatment of the *paraclausithyron* in *c.* 3.10. This is a form employed by all the extant poets who write love elegy. Catullus *c.* 67 presents a dialogue between a poet and a gossiping door, while Tibullus 1.2.7–14 presents the lover as cursing the door which bars him from his mistress and Propertius 1.16 gives us a door that complains of its mistress’s behavior and reports the excluded lover’s song. *Odes* 3.10 presents what was presumably the original form of the *paraclausithyron*, an address to a potential mistress protected by a bolted door.

How would a poet of Epicurean persuasion handle this form? As it happens, we can answer that question because Lucretius includes mockery of the locked-out lover in his denunciation of sexual passion in Book 4 (4.1177–84), arguing that for all his extravagant gestures the lover would curse his own folly if once the door were opened. In Horace’s *c.* 3.10 the speaker plays the role of locked-out lover, employing not mockery, but self-mockery.

Once again the poem begins with a complex utterance, with complexity being achieved on this occasion through syntax, through the use of a remote present condition in which the main verb is withheld until the second to last word. Even more strikingly the first stanza invokes images of northern savagery (reference to the river Tanais or Don, commonly regarded as Europe’s boundary; suggestion that the woman is married to a barbarian (*saevio ... uiro*); and the description of the North Winds as locals). But once again the opening misleads, for the poem’s setting is actually before a house with a handsome courtyard garden, possibly in Rome.

Then follows an attack on Lyce for her arrogance (*superbiam*), arguing that she, with her Etruscan father, was not born to be Penelope, criticizing her for rejecting lovers’ gifts and prayers and comparing her to rigid oak and Moorish snakes. The irony is of course that the lover abuses Lyce for enacting precisely those values which the Augustan regime promoted: she is a faithful wife. But the crowning irony is achieved when the lover makes his final threat: if Lyce will not yield, he will go away.

Clearly the Horatian lover has little in common with the self-obsessed lovers who speak the poems of Tibullus and Propertius. He is rather capable of presenting his situation with wit, irony and, most importantly, detachment.

Ovid's *Heroides* and Seneca's *Phaedra*

From Euripides to Seneca and Racine, the story of Phaedra's love for Hippolytus has provided the plot for some of Europe's greatest tragic dramas. And yet the pivotal text in this great tradition is not a drama but a love elegy, *Heroides* 4. In this section I propose to explore the ways in which Seneca's reading of the Ovidian Phaedra effected a radical shift in the western theatrical tradition.

One obvious difference between Euripides' version of the story and those of Seneca and Racine is the titles of their plays. Euripides writes *Hippolytus*, while both Seneca and Racine call their plays *Phaedra*. This change in title reflects a marked shift in emphasis, for whereas in *Hippolytus* Phaedra's death is reported when the play is only half over, the later plays have Phaedra as their primary focus, with the queen dying onstage in the final act. Within extant classical literature (we have just over thirty lines of Sophocles' *Phaedra*), it is Ovid who provides us with the first detailed exploration of Phaedra's psychology.

Thus it is Ovid who first emphasizes the importance of heredity in the case of both Phaedra and Hippolytus, with Phaedra juxtaposing the words "Amazonian man" with "Cretan woman" in her letter's second line (*Amazonio Cressa*, *Her.* 4.2). The Euripidean Phaedra alludes but briefly and obliquely to her Cretan origins, to her mother and sister (*Hipp.* 337, 339). By contrast, her Ovidian counterpart draws attention to two of her relatives by name, Europa and Pasiphae, and adds in her sister for good measure (*Her.* 4.55–60). She then draws the conclusion that in falling in love with her stepson, she is following in the footsteps of her female relatives: "en, ego nunc, ne forte parum Minoia credar, / in socias leges ultima gentis eo!", "Behold, now I, lest I be thought too little a woman of Minos' family, come under my family's laws last of all" (*Her.* 4.61–2). Unfortunately, Phaedra is less perceptive on the subject of Hippolytus' ancestry, for she fails to link his descent from an Amazon (*Her.* 4.2) with his reported hatred of women (*quamuis odisse puellas / diceris*, *Her.* 4.173–4).

We find this same combination of awareness and lack of awareness of heredity's importance in Seneca's *Phaedra*. The Senecan Phaedra is equally conscious of her status as a member of Minos' family (*Phaed.* 127) and understands the importance of descent from Pasiphae: *fatale miserae matris agnosco malum*, "I recognize my wretched mother's fated/fatal evil" (*Phaed.* 113). Phaedra's nurse is also aware of the propensity of this family's women to sexual crime: *natura totiens legibus cedet suis, / quotiens amabit Cressa?*, "Will nature resign its own laws, whenever a Cretan woman loves?" (*Phaed.* 176–7). Unlike the Ovidian Phaedra, Seneca's nurse understands the connection between Hippolytus' Amazon mother and his misogyny: *conubia uitat: genus Amazonium scias*, "He shuns marriage: you should recognize the Amazon breed" (*Phaed.* 232). Theseus, by contrast, knows the facts of Hippolytus' birth, but misinterprets them, for he sees Hippolytus' alleged rape of Phaedra as the product of his Amazonian birth (*Phaed.* 907–11). Had Hippolytus actually raped Phaedra, he would of course have been following in the footsteps of that notorious womanizer, his father.

Related to this question of heredity is the poets' use of divine machinery. In *Hippolytus* Euripides presents a world governed by the eternal struggle between hostile divinities, Aphrodite and Artemis, with Aphrodite declaring her determination to punish Hippolytus in the prologue (*Hipp.* 21–2) and Artemis promising revenge in the epilogue (*Hipp.* 1421–2). Here too Ovid innovates. While retaining Hippolytus' devotion to Artemis/Diana (*Her.*

4.40, 87, 91), he alters the role of Aphrodite/Venus, for now Venus' hostility is directed not towards Hippolytus but Phaedra. Thus Phaedra suggests that Venus is hostile to her family: "forsitan hunc generis fato reddamus amorem, / et Venus ex tota gente tributa petat", "Perhaps I may be paying this love to my family's fate, and Venus may be seeking tribute from all my clan" (*Her.* 4.53–4). She does not, however, explain why this might be so. The Senecan Phaedra follows suit, for she not only envisages the same causation, Venus' hostility towards her family, but also offers a mythological explanation: Venus loathes the Sun's descendants because of his revelation of her adultery with Mars (*Phaed.* 124–8).

Ovid also changes the character of Phaedra's relationship with Theseus. Note that for Euripides Theseus is a man who is entirely innocent in his wife's eyes (*Hipp.* 320–1), a man who is just returning from an oracle (*Hipp.* 792). For the Ovidian Phaedra Theseus has provided several grounds for resentment: his close relationship with Pirithous, his killing of the Minotaur, her brother, and his abandonment of Ariadne, her sister (*Her.* 4.109–16). While Ovid leaves the nature of Theseus' relationship with Pirithous unclear, implying perhaps that they are homosexual lovers (*illum Pirithoi detinet ora sui*, "The shore of his dear Pirithous detains him", *Her.* 4.110), the Senecan Phaedra is scathing about her husband's infidelity: *profugus en coniunx abest / praestatque nuptae quam solet Theseus fidem*, "See, my husband is away / and Theseus offers his wife his customary fidelity", *Phaed.* 91–2. The Senecan Theseus is detained not on "the shore of his dear Pirithous", but is imprisoned deep in the underworld for aiding Pirithous in his attempted rape of Proserpina (*Phaed.* 93–8).

One of the major differences between the Euripidean and Ovidian Phaedras is Ovid's closer attention to his character's feelings and their origins. In his tragedy Euripides presents Phaedra's love as a given and allows Aphrodite to claim responsibility (*Hipp.* 22–3), for he seems more interested in the subtle psychological interplay between the queen and her nurse which leads to the revelation of Phaedra's love.

The Senecan Phaedra's greater complexity is also apparent in her ambivalent view of herself. This too derives from Ovid. Thus, as Armstrong points out (Armstrong 2006, 291), Phaedra offers herself to Hippolytus as if she were a virginal Ariadne: *respersa nulla labe et intacta, innocens / tibi mutor uni*, "spattered with no stain, untouched, innocent, for you alone am I transformed," *Phaed.* 668–9. So too the Ovidian Phaedra emphasizes her innocence: "non ego nequitia socialia foedera rumpam; / fama – uelim quaeras – crimine nostra uacat", "I shall not break my marriage obligations through wickedness; my reputation – I would like you to ask – is free of crime" *Her.* 4.17–18; also 31–2). Linked to this is the fact that both Phaedras blur the line between son and father: *placuit domus una duabus*, "a single house has pleased two women" (*Her.* 4.63) says the Ovidian Phaedra, while Seneca's says *domus sorores una corripuit duas*, "A single house has seized two sisters" (*Phaed.* 665). But the Senecan Phaedra takes this one step further, seeing Hippolytus as a more perfect version of her husband (*Phaed.* 646–56).

There is no doubt that differences of genre are important here. First, Ovid is writing a version of erotic elegy, a genre that characteristically focuses on a person's (usually a man's) emotional responses to his beloved's behavior. Second, Ovid's poem takes the form of a letter; and letters, by definition, purport to present an individual's point of view. Whereas Euripides purports to present an objective view of events in which the principal characters speak for themselves, Ovid gives us Phaedra's perspective alone, including of course an account of her responses to Hippolytus' behavior.

It is all the more striking then that when Seneca writes his tragedy on the subject of Phaedra's love for Hippolytus, he incorporates a key concept derived from erotic elegy. Of particular importance in *Phaedra* is the Propertian (and subsequently Ovidian) notion of the "slavery of love", the *servitium amoris*. For the Propertian lover the word "slavery" describes his usual condition (*assueto ... servitio*, Prop. 1.4.4; also 1.5.19, 1.7.7, 1.12.18). For Propertius' readers the idea that a man could adopt so humiliating a subject position, enslavement to a woman as a result of sexual passion, was doubtless appalling (Lyne 1979, 127). Ovid is explicit: *turpe ... servire puellae* "it is shameful to be enslaved to a girl" (*Am.* 2.17.1). While the Ovidian Phaedra suggests that her court might be enslaved to Hippolytus (*Her.* 4.164), Seneca's Phaedra goes one step further and offers herself as slave to Hippolytus:

matris superbum est nomen et nimium potens:
nostros humilior nomen affectus decet;
me uel sororem, Hippolyte, uel famulam uoca,
famulamque potius: omne servitium feram.

(*Phaedra* 609–12)

The name of mother is arrogant and too powerful: a humbler name suits our feelings; call me sister, Hippolytus, or servant, yes, servant: I will endure every kind of slavery.

Here the concept of the "slavery of love" plays an important part in Phaedra's strategy for seducing Hippolytus. Hippolytus has just addressed her as "mother", a term that is dangerously close to accurate: she is his stepmother. The suggestion that he might call her "sister" might imply incest, but it also reflects the fact that *soror* can be used euphemistically of a mistress (*OLD* sv *soror* §1d). The subsequent shift from "sister" to "servant" or "slave" is intended of course to deflect still further concern that Phaedra is proposing an incestuous relationship. But one effect of using this kind of language is to align her role with that of the male lover who speaks Propertius' *Monobiblos* and Ovid's *Amores*.

For a poet writing in the fifties and sixties CE (the precise date of Seneca's *Phaedra* is unknown) there were several available models for the depiction of an erotic relationship. There was on the one hand Virgil's Dido, a model favored in some instances by the Flavian epicists (see Dietrich 2004). While there may be affinities between Phaedra and Dido (both are women who love men who reject them and then commit suicide), Seneca underlines Phaedra's connections with erotic elegy, particularly of course with *Heroides* 4.

Propertius and Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*

The story of Hylas was well known. Indeed, for the narrator of *Georgics* 3 it was so familiar as not to bear repeating (*G.* 3.6). And yet the story was subsequently told at length by two important Roman poets: Propertius in *Elegy* 1.20 and Valerius Flaccus in his *Argonautica* (probably written in the 70s and 80s CE). While the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes is certainly the primary intertext for much of Valerius Flaccus' retelling of the story of Jason and the Argonauts, there is no doubt that the Flavian epicist

alludes constantly to the Roman poetic tradition, particularly to Catullus *c.* 64, Virgil's *Eclogues*, Horace's *Odes*, Seneca's *Medea* and Lucan's *Civil War*. But for his account of the loss of Hylas in Books 3 and 4, Propertius 1.20 is the most important Roman inter-text.

Valerius' use of verbal reminiscence makes plain that he expects his readers to have Propertius in mind (Colton 1964, 36; Heerink 2007, 607). Propertius describes Hylas' separation from the Argonauts as follows:

at comes inuicti iuuenis processerat ultra
raram sepositi quaerere fontis aquam.
(Prop. 1.20.23–4)

But the unconquered youth's companion had advanced further to seek out a secluded spring's exquisite water.

This is Valerius' description of the Dryope's response to the approach of Hercules:

cum fugerent iam tela ferae, processerat ultra
turbatum uisura nemus fontemque petebat.
(Val. Fl. 3.530–1)

While the wild beasts were now fleeing his weapons, she had advanced further to see the troubled grove and was seeking the spring.

And there is another more subtle connection. In Propertius, and only in Propertius, is mention made of an attempt by Zetes and Calais to rape Hylas (1.20.25–32). The Valerian version seems to reflect this fact when Calais in particular (*ante omnes*, 3.691) urges the Argonauts to leave Hercules behind (Malamud and McGuire 1993, 196).

Elegy 1.20 constitutes an anomaly within the *Monobiblos*, for it is the first poem in the collection that is not quasi-autobiographical and the last whose subject is sexual passion. It is also the only poem that presents a same-sex relationship. Coming as it does after one of the most brilliant of the Cynthia poems, the subject matter of 1.20, a segment of Argonautic myth familiar from Apollonius and Theocritus, surprises. Given Propertius' evident concern with the architecture of the *Monobiblos* (Skutsch 1963, Otis 1965), it is impossible to believe that the placing of this third-person narrative is accidental.

In recent years scholars have suggested that 1.20 is metapoetical (Heerink 2007, Petrain 2000), that is, it embodies reflection on Propertius' place within the poetic tradition. First, it should be noted that Propertius' treatment of Hylas is much closer to Theocritus than to Apollonius. Like Theocritus, Propertius employs the form that we call the "epyllion." Apollonius' account is, by contrast, a section of a much larger work, a work with epic pretensions. Note too that both Theocritus and Propertius begin their poems with an addressee (Nicias in *Idyll* 13, Gallus in 1.20) and that their narratives are supposed to illustrate a moral. We might well see the choice of Theocritus as model as a rejection of the aspiration to write epic, an aspiration that Propertius will reject explicitly in the first poem of Book 2. Second, the fact that Propertius' addressee bears the name "Gallus" may be intended to remind the reader of Propertius' elegiac predecessor (Ross 1975, 78–81; Petrain 2000, 409–21; King 1980, 212–30). In that case, Propertius here lays claim to Gallus as model within the Roman tradition. Third, the main theme of

1.20, the risk of losing the beloved to a rival and the distress that this can cause, is central to the *Monobiblos* as a whole, for the Propertian lover is constantly anxious about Cynthia's fidelity.

If we turn to Valerius Flaccus, we find a fuller account of the loss of Hylas than in any other ancient text. Valerius' narrative strategy is to create the expectation that his version will follow the lines laid down by his predecessors and to defeat that expectation. Thus Mopsus predicts the death of Hylas in Book 1 in the following terms:

subita cur pulcher harundine crines
uelat Hylas? unde urna umeris niueosque per artus
caeruleae uestes?

(Val. Fl. 1.218–20)

But why does lovely Hylas suddenly veil his hair with reeds? Why the urn upon his shoulders
and the blue clothing over his snowy limbs?

For the learned reader of Valerius' epic the answers are obvious: Hylas' hair is veiled with reeds and his limbs are clothed in blue because he is fated to drown; he carries an urn because he will be seeking water from a spring. This much is common to the versions of Apollonius, Theocritus and Propertius.

But Valerius' account of Hylas' fate in *Argonautica* 3 differs significantly from those of his predecessors and from Mopsus' prophecy. First, while it is true that Hylas drowns (3.562–4), he is not seized while drawing water from a spring. Rather, Hylas is grabbed by Dryope as he rests beside a stream, exhausted from his pursuit of a stag through the wilderness (3.551–7).

The fact that Valerius' Hylas hunts suggests that he differs significantly from the Hylas of tradition. For Apollonius he is the youthful bearer of Heracles' bow and arrows (1.132) and the servant who prepares the hero's meal (1.1208–9). For Theocritus he is Heracles' beloved, who prepares food for Heracles and Telamon (*Id.* 13.6, 36–7), while for Propertius he is Hercules' beautiful companion, who seeks fresh water (1.20.5, 23–4). Like Apollonius, Valerius emphasizes Hylas' role as squire (1.110–11) and his youth (3.486). But he also characterizes Hylas as a warrior who fights in the battle at Cyzicus (3.183–5). In fact, he is *spes maxima bellis* "greatest hope in war" (3.183).

This is not all that Valerius' predecessors share. In Theocritus and Propertius it is clear that the relationship between Heracles/Hercules and Hylas is a pederastic one. Indeed, that is the hypothesis upon which *Idyll* 13 and *Elegy* 1.20 are founded. Although it has been argued that Hylas is Heracles' beloved in Apollonius (see, for example, Hunter 1993, 38–41 and DeForest 1994, 63–66), it is a case that requires argument, for the relationship's erotic nature is at worst doubtful and at best implied; it is by no means explicit.

How then does Valerius present the relationship? Until the moment when Hylas is lost it is possible to read the relationship between Hercules and Hylas as non-sexual, as an instance of comradeship between warriors. Indeed, there are suggestions that Hercules is a kind of father to Hylas (*pater* 3.565). Now, however, the narrator emphasizes the strength of Hercules' reaction to Hylas' absence (3.572–3): *uarios hinc excitat aestus / nube mali percussus amor* ("love, shattered by a cloud of evil, arouses shifting tides of passion"), describing Hercules' physical symptoms in terms which recall the Catullan lover's response to the sight of Lesbia with another man: he turns pale, he sweats, he

loses rationality (3.576–7; cf. Cat. c. 51.7–12). Moreover, allusions to Virgil *Aeneid* 2 (Aeneas and Creusa) and Ovid *Metamorphoses* 3 and 4 (Echo and Narcissus, Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, both of which episodes also allude to Propertius 1.20) underline the erotic character of this relationship (Malamud and McGuire 1993, 208; Heerink 2007, 607–610). There is no doubt that by taking *Elegy* 1.20 as his model, Valerius Flaccus has “advanced further” than Apollonius of Rhodes in his depiction of Hercules and Hylas. Indeed, Valerius might be said to have introduced a quasi-elegiac episode into his epic. As so often in the *Argonautica*, although the narrative line owes much to Apollonius, Valerius’ treatment of events is more deeply indebted to the Roman literary tradition, in this case to Virgil, Ovid and, most explicitly, Propertius.

Ovid’s *Art of Love* and Statius’ *Achilleid*

For Statius’ *Achilleid* (mid-90s CE) Ovid’s *Art of Love* is a major intertext. That a Flavian epicist should take Ovid’s most notorious work as a model is perhaps surprising, but we need to recall that Ovid and Statius share an interest in one of the most important events of the life of the young Achilles: the rape of Deidamia. (For a more detailed examination of Statius’ use of allusion in *Achilleid*, see Hinds 1998, 136–42; Davis 2006b.)

For Ovid’s teacher, Achilles is a splendid paradigm of the successful use of force when trying to win a girl’s love. Having recommended faking tears, the teacher suggests kisses and, if they fail, the lover should try force in full confidence that this is what girls really want: *uim licet appelles: grata est uis ista puellis* (“You may call it force: girls like that kind of force,” *Ars* 1.673). Lest there be any doubt about what is meant here, the teacher gives examples: *uim passa est Phoebe: uis est allata sorori; / et gratus raptae raptor uterque fuit* (“Phoebe suffered force: force was applied to her sister, and each rapist was pleasing to the girl he’d raped,” *Ars* 1.679–80). Ovid’s teacher plainly recommends rape as part of the lover’s armory.

How then does the teacher present Achilles and Deidamia? Since Achilles is already present in Deidamia’s bedroom disguised as a girl, there are no preliminaries:

forte erat in thalamo uirgo regalis eodem;
haec illum stupro comperit esse uirum.
uiribus illa quidem uicta est, ita credere oportet:
sed uoluit uinci uiribus illa tamen.
(*Ars* 1.697–700)

By chance the royal maiden was in the same bedroom; she discovers that he is a man through violation. She was overcome by strength, so we must believe: but she wanted to be overcome by strength.

What are the consequences of Achilles’ action? Deidamia is won over and longs for him to stay. (For discussion of this passage’s sexual punning and its political implications see Davis 2006a, 94–5.)

How then does Statius present this event? First it should be noted that Statius clearly alludes to Ovid when the narrator describes Achilles as *improbus* (“shameless,” *Ach.* 1.569), just as the teacher’s imaginary girl rebukes her rapist-lover, addressing him as

improbe (*Ars* 1.665). Achilles also employs some of the teacher's recommended techniques, most notably charm, song and praise. On the other hand, he does not dress in a simple manly fashion as the teacher recommends (*Ars* 1.505–24), for he is dressed as a girl. Nor does he employ the teacher's preferred method of deception (*Ars* 1.631–58), since he actually loves Deidamia (note *Ach.* 1.301–10 and the following similes with their allusions to *Aeneid* 12 [Lavinia and Turnus] and *Georgics* 3 [the bull]). When it comes to the rape itself Statius is briefer than Ovid, describing the event in less than two lines: *ui potitur uotis et toto pectore ueros / admouet amplexus* ("he obtains his wish by force and with all his heart applies genuine embraces," *Ach.* 1.642–3), though employing Ovid's preferred alliteration of consonantal u when describing rape (cf. *Ars* 1.699–700).

Where Statius' treatment differs most from Ovid's is his representation of the aftermath. Consider Deidamia's behavior. In Ovid Deidamia is won over by her rape to the extent that she wants Achilles to stay so that she can repeat the experience (*Ars* 1.703–6). Thus she proves the teacher's claim that girls like rape (*Ars* 1.673). In the *Achilleid*, by contrast, Deidamia tries to prevent Achilles moving beyond innocent play (*Ach.* 1.586–91) and then protests loudly after the event (*Ach.* 1.643–5). Moreover, Achilles later defends Deidamia's behavior to her father by pointing out that she had not the ability to resist his strength (*Ach.* 1.905). Note too that where the Ovidian Deidamia urges her lover to stay (*mane*, 1.701), the Statian Deidamia thrice urges him to go (*Ach.* 1.940, 941, 942). Clearly Statius invokes Ovid with the intention of rejecting the version of female sexuality expounded by the teacher. As so often, allusion here functions as a means of differentiation.

Achilles too is treated differently. Where the Ovidian Achilles is, it seems, simply taken off to Troy, the Statian hero remains on Scyros until after the birth of Pyrrhus (*Ach.* 1.908, 2.24). Consequently, he willingly acknowledges responsibility for Deidamia's pregnancy and so the princess's nurse is won over by the prayers of both Deidamia and Achilles (*Ach.* 1.670). Note too that after his identity has been revealed by Ulysses' stratagem, Achilles' passion leads him to confront Deidamia's father and insist that he himself be punished (*Ach.* 1.903–7). This Achilles is not Ovid's macho rapist.

But if allusion to Ovid's *Art of Love* tends to produce an un-Ovidian Achilles, one who is both impulsive and responsible, allusions to other texts complicate the picture. Consider, for example, Achilles' choice of subject matter when playing for his mother, Thetis. He sings of Hercules, Pollux's defeat of Amycus, Theseus' destruction of the Minotaur and Thetis' marriage to Peleus (*Ach.* 1.189–94). Readers familiar with Catullus *c.* 64 will recall that Catullus had managed to combine into a single poem the stories of the Argo's voyage (*c.* 64.1–18; Hercules and Pollux were both Argonauts), Ariadne's love for Theseus (*c.* 64.50–250) and the wedding of Peleus and Thetis (*c.* 64.19–49, 251–381). They might also note that the first book of the *Achilleid* ends with Achilles promising fidelity to Deidamia:

talia dicentem non ipse immotus Achilles
solatur iurataque fidem iurataque fletu
spondet et ingentis famulas captumque reuersus
Ilion et Phrygiae promittit munera gazae.
irrita uentosae rapiebant uerba procellae.

(Stat. *Ach.* 1.956–60)

Not unmoved himself, Achilles consoles her as she speaks such words, and swears loyalty and pledges what he swears with tears, and promises huge numbers of servants, Ilium captured and gifts of Phrygian treasure when he returns. Airy winds snatch away his empty words.

Note the emphasis here on good faith. Achilles “swears loyalty”; he pledges (*spondet*: a term suggestive of the marriage contract) what he has sworn; he promises gifts. But that last line is most telling, for it implies that these promises will not be fulfilled. And that implication is reinforced by the fact that the line rewrites Catullus *c.* 64.59, a line used of Theseus abandoning Ariadne: *irrita uentosae linquens promissa procellae* (“leaving behind empty words to the airy wind”). Achilles will be a second Theseus.

He will also be a second Aeneas. As Feeney and Heslin point out (Feeney 2004, 89–90; Heslin 2005, 93–101), the similes in which Achilles is compared to Apollo (*Ach.* 1.165–6) and Deidamia is likened to Diana (*Ach.* 1.294–5) remind us of the paired similes in the *Aeneid* in which Aeneas is likened to Apollo (4.143–50) and Dido is compared to Diana (1.498–502). Here too the result will be same. As Aeneas abandons Dido, so Achilles will desert Deidamia.

Statius’ *Achilleid* is a wonderfully rich text. It proposes an illustration from Ovid’s *Art of Love* as a model for its central episode, only to subvert the force of the teacher’s arguments concerning rape and female sexuality. It then complicates this argument through allusion to Catullus and Virgil (and others) to suggest that Achilles will after all conform to the paradigm of male sexuality that we so often find in epic or quasi-epic texts.

Conclusion

I began this chapter by observing that love elegy is the characteristic mode of poetic production in the first thirty years of the Augustan principate. One of the striking features of Roman literary history is that, for us at least, Ovid’s *Art of Love* (1 BCE) concludes the story. Although poets continued to write love elegy, epic or quasi-epic poetry is the dominant genre in the first century CE. Think of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Think of Lucan’s *Civil War*, Statius’ *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*, Valerius’ *Argonautica* and Silius’ *Punica*. For these authors Virgil’s *Aeneid* and (for Lucan and the Flavians) Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* are the key texts.

It is important to note that love elegy is not a univocal term. While the genre obviously includes those works that we think of as central to its self-definition, quasi-autobiographical poems concerning a man’s relationship with his mistress, it also includes significant ‘variations’ (e.g., some of the poems in Propertius’ fourth book, Ovid’s *Heroides* and *Art of Love*). And elegy proposes a variety of possible speakers, including the pederast (Propertius 1.20 and Tibullus 1.4), the loyal wife (Propertius 4.3), the mythological heroine (*Heroides*), and the female lover (Sulpicia; for discussion of the Augustan reception of Sulpicia’s elegies see Hallett 2009). In this context it is particularly striking that while Virgil and Horace react to love elegy in what we think of as its conventional form, for post-Augustan poets such as Seneca, Valerius Flaccus, Statius (and Silius Italicus: see the Guide to Further Reading), it is the “variations” that prove most influential.

FURTHER READING

There is no comprehensive account of the reception of love elegy in Augustan and post-Augustan literature. There have of course been studies of relationships between the elegists (Gallus and Propertius, Propertius and Ovid and so on), but little attention has been given to the reception of love elegy in other genres. In addition to the works listed in the Bibliography, the following are worth exploring.

There has been valuable work on Ovid's exploitation of love elegy's tropes in *Metamorphoses*, *Fasti*, *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. (See, for example, Hinds, S. 1985. "Booking the Return Trip: Ovid and *Tristia* 1." *PCPS* 31: 13–32; Elsner, J. and Sharrock, A. 1991. "Re-Viewing Pygmalion." *Ramus* 20: 149–182; Rosenmeyer, P. A. 1997. "Ovid's *Heroides* and *Tristia*: Voices from Exile." *Ramus* 26: 29–56.) Elsner and Sharrock consider the Pygmalion episode in *Metamorphoses* 10 as a reflection on love elegy, while Hinds and Rosenmeyer consider the connections between *Heroides* and *Tristia*.

Much work is currently being done on Flavian poetry. While Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are the most important intertexts, love elegy is significant too. Leaving aside Valerius Flaccus and Statius' *Achilleid*, works that I have already considered, Marcus Wilson examines Ovid's impact (including that of the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria*) on Silius' *Punica* (Wilson, M. 2004. "Ovidian Silius." *Arethusa* 37: 225–249), while Alessandro Barchiesi considers the importance of *Remedia Amoris* for the Capua episode in *Punica* 11 (Barchiesi, A. 2003. "Niente Sangue per Cupido [Ov. *Rem.* 25–26]," in Gazich, R., ed. *Fecunda Licentia: Tradizione e Innovazione in Ovidio Elegiaco: Atti delle Giornate di Studio, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Brescia e Milano, 16–17 Aprile 2002*. 37–48). Carole Newlands considers Tibullus 1.7 and 2.5 in relation to Statius' *Silvae* 4.3 (Newlands, C. E. 2002. *Statius' Silvae and the Poetics of Empire*. Cambridge), while Jessica Dietrich considers *Amores* 2.6 in relation to *Silvae* 2.4 (Dietrich, J. S. 2002. "Dead Parrots Society." *AJP* 123: 95–110).

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CHAPTER 28

Love Elegies of Late Antiquity

James Uden

Does meter have memory? When the Augustan elegists spoke about their own genre, their thematic and ideological allegiances were tied to a large extent to the particular characteristics of the elegiac couplet. Cupid's theft of one of Ovid's metrical feet committed Ovid to his poetic program. Ovid imagines himself destined by meter to speak about love rather than "arms and violent wars" (*Am.* 1.1.1–4), and the absence of one measure in every second line is a constant reminder of the kind of poem he is *not* writing. Later, when he does write of other subjects in elegiac couplets, as in the *Fasti*, the change serves to sharpen rather than blur the meter's generic associations, provoking in the listener a sensitivity to the "elegiac" aspects of his political theme. Poetic memory (to use Conte's phrase) seems to inhere in the meter itself – but how tenacious is that memory? In the late antique period, the elegiac couplet undergoes an immense expansion in thematic range and scope, as the meter is rediscovered again and again, unlocking different affective and structural capacities in the form. By the time we reach Venantius Fortunatus (c.540–c.600 C.E.), all but eight poems of his corpus – which encompasses panegyric, verse epistles, hymns, ecphrastic poetry, and other occasional verse – are in elegiacs. As Roberts (2007, 158–60) has demonstrated, the elegiac couplet's ubiquity is testament to the changed reception environment: for an audience increasingly insensitive to classical vowel quantities, the discrete compositional units of the elegiac meter allowed for ready comprehension, artistic balancing and antithesis, and sound effects such as assonance and rhyme not dependent on the perception of vowel quantities.

Yet the memory of Augustan elegy *does* prove tenacious in the late antique period – and surprisingly so; for, although Ovid's readership never waned, there is long-standing academic uncertainty about the extent to which the other Augustan elegists were read. Propertius' famous couplet about the *Aeneid* (2.34.65–6) was excerpted at some stage

into the *Anthologia Latina* (258 SB), and may have enjoyed separate circulation with Vergil's poem; Lactantius, in the early fourth century, quoted Propertius 4.1.11–14 (albeit in incorrect order) on the formation of the first senate in early Rome (*Div. Inst.* 2.6.14); and numerous passages are cited by late antique grammarians, some reflecting early corruptions in the text (see Butrica 1984, 19–32). Shackleton Bailey (1952) assembled a lengthy catalogue of Propertian parallels of varying cogency (especially in the Christian writers); yet equally telling is the absence of allusions where we would perhaps expect them, as in, for example, Dracontius' epyllion about Hercules and Hylas (*Romulea* 2; cf. Prop. 1.20), not to mention the apparent fabrication of Propertian verses by Fulgentius and the scholiasts on Ovid's *Ibis* (Butrica (1984, 21–2). Notices by imperial writers such as Quintilian and Apuleius ensured that Tibullus' fame as an elegist also survived. In fifth-century Gaul, Sidonius Apollinaris could reassure one addressee that married life need not entail the abandonment of the liberal arts, reminding him that Corinna "often completed a verse with her Naso", as Cynthia did with Propertius, and Delia did with Tibullus (*Ep.* 2.10.6). But in fact there is little evidence for widespread reading of Tibullus in late antiquity, as also of Sulpicia, who was eclipsed in fame by her namesake, the satirist Sulpicia (Richlin 1992, 132–7).

Nevertheless, the characters, situations and ideological orientations of the Augustan elegists persist as a memory to be recalled by the many new composers of elegiac verse in late antiquity, though first-person erotic elegy finds only one true successor in the period, the sixth-century poet Maximianus. In this chapter, I examine three prominent modes of engagement with the memory of the Augustan elegists. Love elegy in my first group of writers has congealed into an established set of scripts and characters that can be replayed, replied to, or reversed, an extension of a tendency already evident in Ovidian elegy. In the second, Christian poets wed amatory themes to the elegiac meter to fashion what may most justly be called "late antique love elegy", characteristically setting human erotic situations against a rhetoric of impossible, divine paradox. In the third, the Augustan motif of *militia amoris* is applied with new and jarring force to describe the reality of barbarian invasion in the poets' contemporary environment.

1. Tropes of Reception: Role-Play, Response, Reversal

Garrula quod totis resonas mihi noctibus, auris, nescio quem dicis nunc meminisse mei? "hic quis sit, quaeris? resonant tibi noctibus aures et resonant totis: Delia te loquitur."	
Non dubie loquitur me Delia; mollior aura venit et exili murmure dulce fremit.	5
Delia non aliter secreta silentia noctis summissa ac tenui rumpere voce solet, non aliter teneris collum complexa lacertis auribus admotis condita verba dare.	10
agnovi: verae venit mihi vocis imago, blandior arguta tinnit in aure sonus.	

ne cessate, precor, longos gestare susurrus.
 dum loquor haec, iam vos opticuisse queror.
 (*Anth.Lat.* 450SB, text of
 Dingel 2007, 86)

My babbling ear, since you keep echoing to me all night long,
 are you saying that someone is recalling me now?
 “Who is it, you ask? Your ears echo and re-echo
 night after long night: Delia is saying your name”.
 No doubt, Delia is saying my name! A gentler breeze
 has arrived, and murmurs and whirs, soft and sweet.
 It’s the same sound whenever Delia interrupts the night’s intimate silences
 with her voice, hushed and delicate.
 It’s the same sound whenever she wraps her tender arms around my neck,
 I move my ears up close, and she tells me secrets.
 I recognized it: a true echo of her voice has come to me.
 Soothing sound rings in my eloquent ear.
 Don’t stop, I pray you! Keep on whispering to me.
 Even as I say these things, already I grieve for your silence.
 (Translations are my own)

In the poem immediately previous to this one, the poet had announced the end of his relationship. “You want the truth, Delia? Amor had given me to you, and the same Amor has taken me away” (*Anth. Lat.* 449SB, 5–6). But the memories return and Delia’s voice rings in his ear, her words borne on the breeze (3–6). Winds that idly carry off a lover’s words blow frequently throughout love elegy; here, they bring words back. The beloved’s reappearance as echo is also reminiscent of Ovid’s love-sick nymph Echo (*Met.* 3.356–401), the “resounding one” (*resonabilis*, 358), who longed to approach Narcissus with “soothing words” (*blandis dictis*, 375) and throw her arms around his neck (389). After Narcissus had fled from her, her anxieties wasted her body away (*attenuant corpus*, 396; cf. Delia’s *tenui voce*, 8), and like Delia, she was reduced to bodiless sound. The poem is cast as a kind of interruption of the poet’s erotic memories (13–14), but in fact the poem itself seems caught up in its own echo, as close repetitions of phrases evoke the constant ringing in the poet’s *garrula auris*: so, *resonas mihi noctibus auris* (1) is echoed in *resonant tibi noctibus aures* (3); *resonant noctibus* (3) in *resonant totis* (4); *Delia te loquitur* (4) in *loquitur me Delia* (5); and, at the end of the first three hexameters, a punning echo: *auris...aures...aura*.

But the central echo of the poem is, of course, of Augustan elegy, the language and situations of which are mimicked by the poet very closely. The poet scripts a scene outlined by Propertius: ‘Now alone for the first time through the long nights, I am compelled to become a burden upon my own ears’ (1.12.13–4). The fact that Delia has been chosen here as the beloved’s name makes it all but impossible to read the poem as a fragment of subjective experience, given Tibullus’ own elegies to Delia and her resultant fame as Tibullus’ beloved (cf. *Ov. Am.* 3.9.31–2, 55; *Apul. Apol.* 10; *Sid. Apoll. Epist.* 2.10.6). Instead, it seems that reception itself has been figured metaphorically in the poem as an echo. The poet’s memories are described in Augustan elegy’s key programmatic terms: the archetypal softness and slenderness of the Augustan elegists is evoked in the *mollior aura* (5) and in Delia’s *tenuis vox* (8), and the *blandior sonus*

ringing in the poet's *arguta aure* (12) recalls Propertius' description of the song of the *exclusus amator* as *arguta...carmina blanditia* (1.16.16). But, most of all, by writing an apparent first-person account of an erotic experience with the mistress of a previous elegist, the poet characterizes his relationship with the tradition as an echo, as if repeating imaginary phrases from the elegist's own mouth, the "image of the true voice" (*verae...vocis imago*, 11).

The poem is part of a series of epigrams preserved in the *Anthologia Latina* but, since Baehrens, attributed to Seneca, though few modern scholars would assert Senecan authorship for all, or perhaps any, of the poems (Armstrong 1998, 10–29; but cf. Holzberg 2004, arguing for the unity of the collection and authorship by a poet who impersonates Seneca). The closeness of the engagement with Propertius and Tibullus throughout these poems is perhaps one argument for an imperial, rather than late antique, date, given (as we have noted) the paucity of Propertian and Tibullan resonances elsewhere in late antique literature. Yet these epigrams provide an important first step in considering a significant strand of late antique engagement with Augustan elegy. First, it is frequently in epigram that Augustan elegy's erotic themes – and, at times, its specific characters and tropes – make their reappearance in late antiquity. Indeed, the boundary between elegy (as we know it from the Augustans) and epigram is blurred in this period, and it likely was never completely clear. Second, these epigrams suggest a conception of Roman love elegy as a series of already-established scenes and characters (a notion already perceptible in Ovid), an idea that is particularly prominent in late antique engagements with Augustan elegy.

Characters and situations from Augustan love elegy are explored in the epigrams of Decimus Magnus Ausonius (c.310–mid 390s; Kay 2001), though here, additionally, the poet's own sense of lateness finds metaphorical expression in a tendency to view such situations from a retrospective position. In *Ep.* 14, for example, he recalls having implored a woman to accede to his erotic approaches because "time flies" (1); but now time *has* flown, they are both already old, and Ausonius encourages her to let him enjoy "what I did want, though hardly want now" (8). In *Ep.* 103, Ausonius offers what Kay has described as "the epigrammatist's skeptical response to elegy" (2001, 269). In a dialogue with Venus, the goddess offers him a list of strategies to win over women, derived from a most cynical reading of Augustan elegy: the poet should ply women with gifts, entangle them in promises, swear falsely, stand watch outside their doors, break down their doors, and even compose elegies (though he declares himself incapable of that last task). Despite this pretended incompetence, another epigram (*Ep.* 19) demonstrates Ausonius' canny manipulation of the conventions of the elegiac genre:

Laidas et Glyceras, lascivae nomina famae,
coniunx in nostro carmine cum legeret,
ludere me dixit falsoque in amore iocari:
tanta illi nostra est de probitate fides
(*Ep.* 19)

When my wife read in my poetry about the likes of
"Lais" and "Glycera", names with erotic histories,
she said that I was playing around, joking about fictional love-affairs.
So great is her trust in my moral purity!

This is one of a number of epigrams that mention Ausonius' wife: three celebrate her skill in weaving and embroidery (*Ep.* 27–9), and another reworks Catullus 5, with a wish to “live as we have lived” (*vivamus quod viximus*, *Ep.* 20.1; in fact, she seems to have died tragically young: *Parentalia* 9.25–6; Sklenár 2005). With these other poems in mind, Kay (2001, 116–7) reads *Epigram* 19 in strictly biographical terms, as a celebration of the couple's trusting relationship. But that is to rob the epigram of its sting. The pivot on which this witty little poem turns is its multivalent third verse. On one reading, the poet's wife has quelled any suspicions by citing the very idea that let other Latin love poets loose on the moral leash: the idea, as Catullus put it, that a “pious poet should be chaste, but his poems need not be” (16.5–6). She trusts her husband because she knows from the love poets themselves that theirs are ‘fictional affairs’ (*falso...amore*, *Ov. Tr.* 2.340). But, while an elegiac lover typically professes *fides* to his *puella*, no reader familiar with the elegiac tradition could possibly recommend that a *puella* put *fides* in an elegiac lover, especially one who boasts, with suspicious over-exaggeration, of his own *probitas*. Spouses are the archetypal blocking characters in Roman love elegy, but Ausonius' epigram mischievously suggests that the ‘rules’ of writing Roman love poetry can offer their own erotic escape clause. On the other hand, rereading line 3 with the elegiac poets' own language in mind reveals an accusation as much as an assurance, since “to play” (*ludere*) also means “to cheat” in Ovid's amatory lexicon (*Am.* 1.8.86; *Ars* 1.643) and *falsus amor* suggests a “deceitful” love as well as a “fictional” one. His wife, in this reading, astutely casts lovers' language back at her errant *amator*. By viewing Ausonius' polished epigram from different angles, the conventions of the elegiac genre shine reflected in the shifting perspectives of its central characters.

The immoral implications of living a life patterned on the elegiac lover drew the attention of Christian moralists. The anonymous 112-line hexameter *Epigramma Paulini* (Fo 1999), generally accepted as originating in early fifth-century Gaul, belongs to a group of texts from that period that use the barbarian invasions as a backdrop for social invective or moral instruction. As an index of moral degradation after the barbarian attacks, the poem describes a quite literal theatricalization of the contemporary Roman landscape: as one character complains, amidst the destruction of homes and fields, while the upright people attempt to “restore Rome to some semblance of its prior state” (21), instead, “entire mountains of stone have been wasted on building idle theatres” (14). In the face of disaster, moral bonds have been dissolved and everyday life has been translated into spectacle: “surely our bedrooms should be distinct from those hollow theatres?” (78). Part of that theatricality involves acting out the part of the famous beloveds of Roman literary history:

Paulo et Solomone relicto
aut Maro cantatur Phoenissa aut Naso Corinna
(76–7)

Interpretations of the grammar and the sense of these lines have differed, but with Gallico (1982, 171) and Chiappiniello (2009, 178) I translate: “having set aside Saint Paul and Solomon, Vergil is recited by a Dido, or Ovid by a Corinna”. Modern women

have abandoned their Christian reading and instead enthusiastically assume the role of Ovid's elegiac *puella*, becoming a new crowd of Corinnas. Impersonating the literary beloved is a motif already Ovidian in origin: at *Amores* 2.17.27–30, Ovid claims that many women “want to have a name through me”, and speaks of a particular woman who boasts that she had been Corinna all along. The elegiac tradition is conceived of as a series of established scripts than can be inhabited by new actors. Characters from Latin love poetry more broadly populate the poet's own erotic scenario in an epigram in elegiac meter ascribed to the celebrated fourth-century rhetor Latinus Alcimus Alethius (*Anth. Lat.* 715R; Zurli 1992): here, the poet's love, “Lesbia” has sent him a dark red apple, next to which other previous amatory gifts, including that of “Amaryllis” (from Vergil's first *Eclogue*) and the mulberries of Pyramus and Thisbe, pale in comparison.

The role of the elegiac beloved is explored in more daring fashion in an elegiac poem of 32 couplets ascribed to the female poet Eucheria (*Anth. Lat.* 386 SB), who is variously identified as belonging to the circle of Sidonius Apollinaris in fifth-century Gaul (Santelia 2005), or as the wife of Dynamius, a noble of high office in late sixth-century Gaul (Plant 2004, 210–2). The poem is a series of adynata (poetic “impossibilities”). So, for example, at lines 19–20, Eucheria says “Let the lofty lioness be yoked with the worthless fox, let the ape welcome the noble lynx”, and so on, drawing imagery from clothing, geology, astronomy, flowers, fish, liquids, and birds. Eucheria's poem constitutes the longest concatenation of such adynata surviving from antiquity, and, in a culture in which ornate verbal excess conferred cultural capital on the elite (Roberts 2009, 7), her sustained poetic play is itself a declaration of learning and independence. But the main point comes in the poem's last couplet, in which Eucheria describes one man's marriage proposal as an adynaton all its own:

Haec monstra incertis mutant sibi tempora fatis
rusticus et servus sic petat Eucheriam
(31–2; Santelia's text)

Let these monstrosities distort their natural order with outcomes unknown –
only then could a rustic slave seek Eucheria's hand!

Eucheria deprecates her suitor as a rustic (*rusticus*) – unless, as Santelia (2005, 57–62) suggests, she playfully names him as Sidonius Apollinaris' friend Rusticus of Bordeaux. She also labels him a slave (*servus*), though, if the poet's milieu is amongst the nobility of late antique Gaul, a literally servile suitor is far less likely than a reference to the elegiac motif of *servitium amoris*, casting the suitor in the hapless role of the “enslaved” lover, and Eucheria herself in the role of the haughty *domina*. But, in Georgiadou's words, the final lines also constitute a “declaration of her non-compliance with prescribed patterns of behavior forged by her Roman predecessors” (1997, 59). Georgiadou cites Ovid's own use of the adynaton motif to demonstrate the extreme unlikelihood of a woman resisting a potential suitor (*Ars* 1.271–3): “The birds would be silent in spring and the cicadas in summer, and the best breed of hound would retreat before a hare, before a woman fights off the flattering approaches of a young man”.

In fact, a spirit of challenge pervades the entire poem. Eucheria's outspokenness is, from the first lines, self-consciously figured as a disruptive act of poetic representation.

“The threads of gold that gleam when matched with metal”, she says, “these I want to unite (*consociare volo*) with a heap of bristly hair. Silken clothing, a Spartan cloak woven with gems, these I say should be compared (*aequipperanda loquor*) to the skins of goats”. The verbs of willing and saying (*volo*, *loquor*) draw attention to the poet’s own capacity to stage any impossible union: at the level of poetic representation, an impossibility becomes possible at the moment it is said. Moreover, these unions demonstrate a willingness to contaminate the metaphors with which female beauty was traditionally evoked in Roman love poetry. Roses and lilies are here linked with nettles and hemlock (13–14), sweet rose-wine and honey are laced with poison (23–4), and fresh fountains of sparkling water run mixed with dung (25–6). Eucheria’s descriptions even of the noble half of each impossible union cast the appurtenances of female beauty in a singularly unflattering light: “let a pearl now be a captive of its own shine”, she says at line 7 (*sit captiva sui nunc margarita nitoris*). Verbs of union, which clearly foreshadow the marriage proposal of the final line, instead suggest entrapment: as well as being “yoked together” (5, 19, 21, 22, 30), objects are “bound” (6) or “enclosed” (8, 9), or “press upon” each other (14). The cynicism is reminiscent of late antique Christian invective against both female beautification and marriage, as well as the Christian polemicist’s predecessors in Roman satire. Yet in Eucheria’s poem, the provocation seems not to come from any religious perspective, but rather from within the genre itself – the response of one elegiac *puella* to the role tradition prescribed for her to play.

2. Roman Love Elegy and the Christian Rhetoric of Paradox

No student of Latin literary history in late antiquity can afford to ignore the connections between literary and ideological change, and this is especially true when tracing the history of Roman love elegy, for, if shifts occurred in this period in the notion of elegy, much more lasting and influential shifts occurred in the notion of love. As poets were reshaping the old literary forms in order to celebrate new, Christian ideals of chastity and marriage, they rarely aimed at merely suppressing or eliminating erotic sentiment; rather, they aimed at redirecting it. Jerome wrote in his letter to Eustochium that “it is difficult for the human soul not to love: our minds must be drawn towards emotions of each kind. The love of the flesh is overcome by the love of the spirit; desire is quenched by desire” (*Ep.* 22.17). Jerome in this letter portrays Christ as the virgin’s husband, imploring Eustochium to “scorn the flesh and be yoked to your husband’s embrace” (*Ep.* 22.1).

The paradoxical language with which Jerome praises virginity is part of a much wider ‘rhetoric of paradox’ with which early Christians attempted to formulate and express the mysteries of their faith (Cameron 1991, 155–188). While this rhetoric of paradox is present in all types of early Christian discourse, it is especially evident in the expression of erotic ideals, as can be seen in an early example in the so-called *De Ave Phoenix* (“About the Phoenix”), ascribed to Lucius Caelius Firmius Lactantius (Brandt and Laubmann 1893). This 170-line poem in elegiac couplets is regularly cited as the earliest extant Christian poem composed according to classical models – or, perhaps it is best described as a “prudently crypto-Christian” poem (Fontaine 1981, 56), since it is left to the reader

presented here not so much as *exemplum*, but as paradox. The bird's wondrous beauty is celebrated throughout, then cast off at the last to reveal the inner truth of a chaste existence. So too with the poem's own form: the classical reminiscences and extravagant metaphors constitute a celebration of the *decor* of both the phoenix and the pagan poetic tradition, until the truth is unwrapped at the climax, administered in terse phrases and severe paradox – *mors illi Venus est* (165).

A similar paradox is drawn with more explicit reference to Augustan elegy in a later text, the 3-book hexametric *De Laudibus Dei* (Moussy and Camus 1985), composed by Blossius Aemilius Dracontius (c.455–c.505), a key figure in the “Vandal Renaissance” of Latin literature under Vandal kings in North Africa. In his *Art of Biblical Poetry*, Robert Alter observes that “there is no real nature poetry in Psalms, because there is in the psalmist's view no independent realm of nature, but there is creation poetry, which is to say, evocations of the natural world as the embodiment of the Creator's ordering power and quickening presence” (1985, 117). Purportedly composed in prison (Dracontius is also the author of an elegiac petition for freedom, the *Satisfactio*, with clear links to Ovid's exile poetry), Dracontius' *De Laudibus Dei* equally blends biblical narrative with ecstatic appreciation of God's ordering of the natural world, which, in a memorable phrase, he dubs the *sublimis machina rerum* – “the divine mechanism of the universe” (2.55, 196). At lines 1.387–397, Dracontius describes Adam's first sight of Eve, whom God has fashioned from one of Adam's ribs while he was asleep:

Excuitur somno iuvenis, videt ipse puellam	
ante oculos astare suos, pater, inde maritus,	
non tamen ex coitu genitor, sed coniugis auctor.	
somnus erat partus, conceptus semine nullo;	390
materiem fecunda quies produxit amoris	
affectusque novos blandi genuere sopores.	
constitit ante oculos nullo velamine tecta,	
corpore nuda simul niveo quasi nympha profundi:	
caesaries intonsa comis, gena pulcra rubore,	395
omnia pulcra gerens, oculos os colla manusque,	
vel qualem possent digiti formare Tonantis.	

The young man was shaken from sleep, and saw the girl
standing before his eyes – he was her father, and then her husband,
yet no parent from sexual union, but the originator of his own wife.
Sleep was her birth. Her conception was without seed.
A fertile rest brought a new being for him to love,
and seductive slumber was the birth of new emotions.
She appeared before his eyes uncovered by any garment,
her snowy-white body naked, like a nymph from the sea:
her head of hair was unshorn, her beautiful cheeks were blushing.
Every part of her was beautiful – her eyes, face, neck and hands –
a woman as only the fingers of the Lord could shape.

As has long been recognized, line 393 is a close allusion to a line from Ovid's sultry account of an afternoon rendezvous with Corinna, *Am.* 1.5.17: *ut stetit ante oculos posito velamine nostros* (“as she stood before my eyes, her garment laid aside”). Ovid's poem

already had elements of mythological burlesque, picturing Corinna's arrival as a kind of divine epiphany; Dracontius re-imagines the scene as more directly divine. Adam marvels not so much at God's act of creation as at the beauty of his new mate, whose birth is compared, in a typical blurring of mythological boundaries, to the birth of Venus ("a nymph from the sea", 394). Evenepoel (1995) senses a connection with Ovid's Pygmalion, another story in which a perfect woman is created and marveled at, while *materiam...amoris* in line 391 recalls Ovid's advice to learn the places women frequent if you wish to find *materiam...amori* (*Ars* 1.49–50). The enumeration of Eve's physical charms is also superficially reminiscent of Ovid's catalogue of Corinna's attributes in *Am.* 1.5.19–22, but the differences are significant: whereas Ovid delightedly praises Corinna's shoulders, arms, breasts, stomach, hip, and thighs, Adam praises the naked Eve almost as if she were clothed, focusing admiration on her head and hands (body parts that hardly demonstrate the novelty of God's new creation). But, most significantly, and as in the *De Ave Phoenixe*, the Ovidian themes of the passage are qualified by an emphasis upon miraculous paradox (388–90), formulated in arresting oxymoronic phrases ("Sleep was her birth. Her conception was without seed"). Human eroticism is deliberately set in the context of an impossible sexual situation.

The allusion to the *Amores* is part of the poem's broad engagement with what may be called "elegiac ideals". Eden in the *De Laudibus Dei* resembles the pure, private space for which earlier Roman love poets yearned, a "place for those two only, constructed only for humans' secluded delights" (1.454–5), a space of "leisure" (*otium*, 1.549) untouched by other concerns, where the lovers, "publicly and in any place, with emotion and without any shame, yoked kisses" (1.444–5; the phrase *iungere oscula* was coined by, and is found most frequently in, Ovid: McKeown 1998, 91). This depiction is not mere erotic fantasy, nor necessarily the product of serious scriptural exegesis (though the consummation of marriage in Eden was, in fact, commonly accepted in the early rabbinic tradition, and Augustine does countenance the notion of Adam and Eve sharing an ideal sexual relationship uncontaminated by lust: Anderson 1989; Sawyer 1995, 14–19). Rather, Dracontius presents a powerful poetic image of existence before the Fall as epitomized by the ideal romantic relationship between two people. Similarly to Aristophanes' myth of love in Plato's *Symposium*, these are two formed from one body, and Dracontius stresses their preternatural mutuality: God decrees that Adam and Eve "share a pledge", that "their desires and aversions be the same", that "a single will exist between them", that they enjoy "harmonious peace of mind" (1.366–8). The fact that this nostalgic vision of idealized love has been realized in God's presence is at the same time a revision of earlier Latin love poetry, sublimating the inconstant *fides* vowed by the elegists into a spiritual vision of Christian faith in God.

Adam and Eve reappear as a conjugal *exemplum* in a far more bracing revision of earlier poetic and erotic ideals, the 241-line elegiac wedding song or "epithalamium" (*Carm.* 25, de Hartel 1999, 238–245) composed by Pontius Meropius Paulinus, or Paulinus of Nola (c.352 or 353–431). Paulinus' epithalamium was composed for the wedding of Julian of Eclanum (later the target of one of Augustine's most trenchant treatises on sexuality, *Against Julian*), who was the son of Paulinus' friend, the bishop Memor. Despite the poem's explicit rejection of the tropes of both pagan marriage songs and pagan marriage, the choice of meter is not coincidental: Paulinus' two poems in elegiacs (the other is *Carm.* 31, on the death of a young boy) center on elegy's accustomed

themes of love and lament. While memory of elegy's amatory antecedents throws into higher relief the epithalamium's endorsement of conjugal celibacy, Paulinus also nimbly uses the meter's native tendency towards balance and parallelism to underline a novel emphasis on mutuality within the marriage bond. So, at lines 1–2:

Concordes animae casto sociantur amore
virgo puer Christi, virgo puella dei.

Harmonious spirits are bonded in chaste love,
both virgins, boy and girl, of Christ, our God.

The parallelism of *virgo puer*/ *virgo puella* in line 2 evokes, in both form and meaning, the new Christian ideal of *concordia virginitatis* (233), while the phrase *Christi...dei*, divided between the halves of the line, acts as a kind of bond between the two. (Walsh (1975, 245) translates *Christi...dei* as “Christ’s virgin” and “a girl who is God’s”, but the incantatory repetition of *Christe deus* in the opening of line 3 suggests that it should be read as a single phrase). As the poem progresses, the theme of mutuality is constantly matched by Paulinus’ Ovidian delight in finding mutual links in language. When, for example, Adam discovers that God has created Eve, and that he “had been doubled” (*geminatus erat*, 22), Paulinus says that Adam “perceives another himself, from himself, in bonded body” (*seque alium ex sese sociali in corpore cernens*, 23), a line that evokes doubling in both sound (s, c) and grammatical form (*se* doubles to form *sese*, itself a kind of lexical “bonded body”).

As this line shows, Paulinus also sets his amatory subject matter against the background of impossible physical paradox. Paulinus’ references to the couple’s love appear alongside his description of the church as “sister and spouse” to Christ, a “husband not human but divine”, whose offspring “have neither age nor sex”. Indeed, the poet affirms that Christians themselves have only “one body”, since (rephrasing Paul at Galatians 3:28) “in Christ there is neither female nor male” (173–181). Even the social relationships between the wedding parties, though not objectively especially complicated or unusual, are recast as varieties of miraculous physical paradox. Since the presiding bishop, Aemilius, is younger than Memor but his senior in the church, Paulinus describes Aemilius, in riddling fashion, as both Memor’s “father” and “brother” (213), affirming that “both names are in the one body” (214); Memor himself is thus both “younger and older” (215), both “son and brother” (219), and Paulinus marvels adoringly that God could create a “father who is younger, a son born later” (217). The rhetoric is labored in its excess, but key to the text’s ideological goals. By forcing the reader to view these relationships in purposefully strange and unaccustomed ways, the poet highlights the revolutionary changes wrought by Christianity to Roman cultural and familial hierarchies. Paulinus’ elegiac epithalamium empties, then redefines, social roles, in the language of Christianity’s own rhetoric of paradox.

3. Barbarian Invasions and the New *Militia Amoris*

The persona of the Augustan elegists was formulated both explicitly and implicitly against the backdrop of the civil wars. The elegists all depict their amatory *otium* by contrast with military pursuits; and yet the fragility of the elegists’ own world, the borders of

which “are represented as being under continual threat but are preserved in the nick of time” (Wilson 2009, 178), itself testifies to the immense societal destabilization and political reorganization that followed the wars. Indeed, love, chosen as the antitype of war, is not really its opposite, as the elaboration of a metaphorical military vocabulary in Augustan elegy makes clear. Propertius begins his *Monobiblos* with amatory capture, and ends it in the voice of a dead soldier, a victim of civil discord amidst Italy’s “harsh times” (*duris temporibus*, 1.22.4). Suffering is the currency of both love and war, and the cost of both runs very high.

In military terms, the fourth to the sixth centuries presented a sustained example of just such harsh times, as military threats persisted on almost all fronts, and a sense of war’s costs continued to be registered in elegy. The *Carmen de Providentia Dei* ascribed to Prosper of Aquitaine (Marcovich 1989) (early fifth century) begins with an oppositional voice that describes, in elegiac meter, the destruction wrought by the Vandals and Goths and questions God’s apparent neglect of his flock, before the poet switches to hexameters in order to affirm the existence of God’s providential design. The meters encode different perspectives on the same situation: the elegiac voice laments and questions, the hexametrical, didactic voice, instructs and reassures. The same barbarian incursions compel another figure, Rutilius Namatianus, to return from Rome to his war-ravaged homeland of Gaul, as recounted in his 2-book elegiac travel narrative, *De Reditu Suo* (Doblhofer 1972–7). The poet’s choice of meter allows him to occupy different Augustan elegiac personae at various points of his narrative. Frequently, as has been observed, he adopts an Ovidian exilic persona (Tissol 2002), but at points of particular emotion and longing, he also appears in an amatory role, lamenting the departure from his “dear city’s slackened embrace” (35), planting kisses on the gates he must leave in a kind of reverse paraclausithyron (43–4), and addressing Rome not as an aged woman (as others in the period), but as a beautiful, Venus-like deity (47ff). As he sails off to survey the destruction in Gaul, Rutilius fancies that he hears the raucous noise of the *Ludi Romani* emanating from the Circus:

Pulsato notae redduntur ab aethere voces,
vel quia perveniunt vel quia fingit amor
(203–4)

Familiar voices strike the air and come echoing back,
for either they reach my ears – or love feigns them.

For Rutilius, memories of old Rome are transmitted literally in the language of love poetry: as Doblhofer (1972, 109) observes, these lines recall Vergil’s famous description of wishful dreams (“can I trust my eyes? Or do lovers feign their own dreams?”, *Ecl.* 8.108), and Ovid’s conjuring of a lost friend’s face while in exile (“love feigns that one who is dead still lives”, *Pont.* 1.9.8).

When Rutilius addresses his beautiful *Roma*, he speaks of an empire beset by military disaster in the same way as the lovers of old had spoken of their romantic amours. For Orientius, by contrast, whose elegiac work of moral instruction, the *Commonitorium* (Ellis 1888), also refers to the barbarian invasions, sinful sexual love is akin to military disaster in its capacity for destruction. Orientius’ first book includes

a catalogue of instances from both Roman and biblical history in which a woman's charms inspired violence or war (1.341–386), climaxing with the civil war in Israel launched to avenge the rape of a concubine by the Benjaminites at Gibeah (Judges 19–21), military destruction that transformed all of Gibeah into “a pyre” (1.386). This image foreshadows the *Commonitorium*'s most famous passage, the description of the destruction of Gaul at the hands of “barbarian hordes” (2.159–184), in which Orientius laments that “all Gaul lay smoking on a single pyre” (2.184). Rhetorical warnings about the danger of sexual sin become reality in the vision of contemporary military defeat, a structural parallel suggestive of a frequent Christian response to the barbarian crisis: sin is the true enemy, not the invaders, since the destruction wrought by sinfulness to the soul is eternal. The metaphorical equivalence between love and war in this text, then, is very different from Ovid's elegiac assertion that “every lover is a soldier” (*Am.* 1.9.1). Yet there are also flashes of an Augustan erotic elegiac persona in Orientius' poem. Amidst his warnings about succumbing to feminine wiles, he assures his listener that “I myself have suffered through all this” (*omnia perpersus*, 1.406) – a rare personal detail, but also perhaps a reminiscence of Ovid's elegiac persona. Ovid had declared something similar, with tongue firmly in cheek – *omnia perpeterer*, he says at *Am.* 1.13.25, a line itself parodying Propertius' declaration that he will heroically suffer all things for love of Cynthia (*omnia perpetiar*, 2.26B.15; Morgan 1977, 41). Orientius' allusion is a reassertion, from a Christian perspective, of the true suffering occasioned by enslavement to earthly love.

The conceptual link between amatory and military defeat is explored in greatest detail in late antiquity's only love elegist in the Augustan sense, Maximianus (Schneider 2003). One of Maximianus' six elegies narrates a childhood reminiscence involving the philosopher Boethius, which gives that poem a dramatic date in the early sixth century, under the transitory cultural renaissance enjoyed under the Ostrogothic king Theoderic. Since Maximianus is an old man in the other poems, their dramatic date is presumably in the exceedingly troubled years of the mid sixth century, amidst the reconquest of the West by Justinian, leader of the “New Rome” in the East. Although Maximianus' poems are replete with Ovidian and other classical reminiscences, they are nonetheless a product (or perhaps a summation) of late antique elegy more generally. Ausonius' innovation of viewing elegiac situations from a later retrospective position becomes the dominant mode in Maximianus' text, where the elegiac *amator* is an old man beset by bitterness and physical decrepitude. The congealing of Augustan elegiac influence into scripts to be inhabited by new actors is evident in Maximianus' second elegy, in which the poet recalls his long – but now soured – love for Lycoris, whose famous name, shared with the beloved of the genre's founder, Gallus, suggests a metonymic association with the genre itself. Even the paradox between eroticism and chastity in Christian poetry is parodied in Maximianus' third elegy, in which the elegiac *puella* is blurred with the figure of the virgin martyr from Christian hagiography, thereby exposing both the implicit violence of the elegiac tradition and the implicit eroticism of the martyr tradition (Uden 2009).

In the fifth elegy, the elegist recounts an erotic experience with a woman, merely called “the Greek girl” (*Graia puella*), while in the East on a diplomatic mission. As in the poem's obvious Ovidian model, *Amores* 3.7, this encounter ends up foiled by the poet's sexual impotence. The poem begins:

Missus ad Eoas legati munere partes
 tranquillum cunctis nectere pacis opus,
 dum studeo gemini componere foedera regni,
 inveni cordis bella nefanda mei.

(1–4)

I was sent to the Eastern territory with a legate's duty,
 to bind together the quiet work of peace for all.
 While keen to forge treaties between the twin kingdoms,
 I discovered the wicked wars of my own heart.

The motif of *militia amoris*, familiar from the Augustan elegists, is set against the realities of sixth-century conflict between the Western and Eastern halves of the Empire. Their sexual encounter is played out in the West's propagandistic clichés about each side: the poet boasts a hyperbolically old-fashioned identity as a “child of the Etruscan race” (5) and “an old man of Tuscan simplicity” (40), just as the West claimed identification with Italy as the true home of Roman values. He falls prey to the Greek woman's “native tricks” (6), as she sings “I-don't-know-what in Greek” (10), just as Cassiodorus had praised an ambassador to the Eastern capital as so quick-witted that “Greece” could not surpass him in “the slyness at which she excels” (*Var.* 5.40.5), and Gothic propaganda had branded Easterners as “actors and mime artists and thieving sailors” (Procopius, *Wars* 5.18.40; cf. Amory 1997, 112–120). Moreover, when the poet fails to sustain his erection, this sexual humiliation is cast in the language of military defeat: “to you I surrender my arms, rusty through long neglect” (77). Pervasive anxieties over the threat from the East farcically manifest themselves, in elegiac form, as a lover's humiliation at the hands of his *puella*. The point is underlined at the climax of the poem, when the Greek woman delivers an extraordinary panegyric to the powers of the male phallus:

Hac sine diversi nulla est concordia sexus
 hac sine coniugii gratia summa perit.
 haec geminas tanto constringit foedere mentes,
 unius ut faciat corporis esse duo

(5.113–116)

Without it [sc. *mentula*], there is no harmony between sexes,
 without it, the greatest pleasure of marriage dies away.
 It binds together twin minds with such a great treaty
 that it makes two share the one body.

These lines parody Lucretius' hymn to Venus, or perhaps the widely diffused late antique image of cosmic binding more generally (Lapidge 1980). With her philosophical effusions, the *puella* also underlines the poet's own sexual failure, marveling at the potential forcefulness of the masculine member while the poet himself hangs humiliatedly unarmed. But, more significantly for the poem's mid-sixth century context, she also underlines the poet's *civic* failure. His mission, so he says, was to “forge treaties between the twin kingdoms” (3), but, in seeking out erotic battles, he has abandoned his quest to forestall actual battles: “I abandoned care and enthusiasm for the duty imposed upon me”, he says at 44, “given over to your commands, savage Cupid”. Once he fails

sexually, the Greek girl begins to celebrate a masculine power that binds together “twin minds with a treaty”, and celebrates the power of the *mentula* to bring peace even to the “heart of a savage tyrant”, to make mild even “bloody Mars” (141–2). At the last, in a grim reversal, Ovid’s axiom that every lover is a soldier is tested against the military conflicts of Maximianus’ own period, and the failure of his elegies’ persona as both lover and soldier becomes a prescient vision of military defeat in the West.

No other major poet of late antiquity composed a work as closely modeled on the Augustan elegists as Maximianus, but he wrote in a literary period in which the popularity and thematic range of the elegiac meter had reached a new height. There is an abundance of late antique elegy, even though no writer explicitly locates his or her work within the context of an ongoing “elegiac genre”, or articulates a canon of elegiac poetry that extends to his or her own time (cf. the canon of Christian poets fashioned by Venantius Fortunatus at *Vita Sancti Martini* 1.10–25). The meter has become diffuse – but the memory of the Augustan elegists lingers, even as elegy itself shifts into countless new forms. Reminiscences of Ovid’s elegiac *amator*, in particular, appear in both pagan and Christian poets, cutting across ideological and generic lines. The paradoxes and inversions of the Augustan elegists’ responses to a newly imperial Rome persist as a memory to be recalled or rejected in favor of new ideals, and the cultural significance of their *otium* and *amor* changes with all the disasters and developments of the evolving Empire.

FURTHER READING

Currently, there is no book-length survey of late antique elegy, let alone erotic elegy, but the papers in Cantanzaro and Santucci (1989 and 1993) cover a broad spectrum of poets and periods, and provide a good starting point for any investigation. Roberts (2010), not limiting himself to love elegy, offers a clear, learned overview of the elegiac meter in late antiquity, emphasizing its adaptability to different themes. For students of poetry approaching the period for the first time, Charlet (1988) and Roberts (1989) can be recommended as perceptive overviews of late Latin poetics, while Formisano (2007) describes the challenges faced by scholars seeking to delineate the period’s unique aesthetic and provides a helpful outline of the available bibliography. For texts and studies on individual poets and works, see the references in the main text of the chapter.

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CHAPTER 29

Renaissance Latin Elegy

Holt N. Parker

Elegy ought to be candid, tender, terse, transparent, and so to speak, generous; concerned with emotions and exquisite phrases; not obscured by far-fetched stories. Cultivated, neat, rather than overly groomed. Contents: commemoration of the day love began, praise or cursing of same; quarrel, expostulation, prayer, vow, thanksgiving, exaltation; narration of furtive action, crying, altercation, complaint about sin or crime, taking it all back; explanation of one's life; comparison of oneself with one's rival; threat; threat of another girlfriend; complaint to door, doorkeeper, maid, mother, husband, weather, heaven itself; complaint to Cupid, Venus, oneself; hope for death, exile; hatred for absence of girlfriend. Further, desperation with curses, such as are found in [Ovid's] *Ibis* (if for different reasons). Also: Funeral odes, epitaphs, and letters are properly composed in this type of poetry.

(J. C. Scaliger, *Poetices libri septem* 3.126 (1561))

That about sums it up.

The elegiac meter never fell from grace. Ovid (moralisé, or not) was the main source. Dante counted him among the virtuous pagans (*Inf.* 4.90), and there is some truth to Traube's (1911: 2, 113) divvying up of the Middle Ages into the "Age of Virgil" (eighth-ninth centuries), "The Age of Horace" (tenth-eleventh), and the "Age of Ovid" (twelfth-thirteenth). Other poets kept up the tradition: Ausonius (c. 310–395), Venantius Fortunatus (c. 535–c. 595), and so into the Carolingian courts: Alcuin (c. 735–804), Theodulf of Orlans, Ermoldus Nigellus, Hrabanus Maurus. School authors such as Maximianus (sixth century), Avianus's beast fables (c. 410) and their offspring, the *Ysengrimus* (1148/9) of Nivardus of Ghent and the *Romulus* ("Gualterus Anglicus," c. 1200), or Arrigo of Settimello's *Elegia* (1193) provided models for verse composition. Manuals such as Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars versificatoria* (c. 1175) and Everardus Alemannus's *Laborintus* (c. 1225) taught the basics and elements of style. The couplet

was the preferred form for long poems such as Peter of Eboli's (d. 1219/20) *De rebus Sicilis* and Quilichino da Spoleto's (early thirteenth century) *Historia Alexandri Magni*.

A more curious conduit was the "elegiac comedies," twelfth-century comic tales with plots of sexual intrigue (Orlandi 1990, Elliott 1984). Originating in the Loire valley, with William de Blois, Arnulf of Orléans, and others, they soon traveled to Italy (Bertini 1976–2000). One important manuscript containing the racy plays *Alda* and *Lidia* (plus *Geta*, a reworking of *Amphitruo*) was copied by Boccaccio, who used *Lidia* for the story of *Decameron* 7.9. Italy produced its own additions, such as Richard of Venosa's *De Paulino et Polla* (c. 1228–31), which bizarrely was also used as a school text, and the sexier *De Cerdone* probably by the Dominican Jacobus de Benevento (thirteenth century).

Poets wrote about a lot of things in elegiac couplets; they wrote about love in a lot of meters. Our particular concern is the intersection of the two, and especially those poets who present themselves as the literary heirs of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid.

Here I can only sketch out a history, mention a few names, cite a few poems, point to some books, and end with a few massive generalizations.

Love elegy had a harder time of it, despite the meter's occasional use for more personal poems. Italy was the re-birthplace but poets as well as poems traveled far, and though we can trace certain veins of influence, there is little in the way of schools or nationalities (Sparrow 1960, 354 n. 1, 409; Godman 1985, 261). As his name shows, by the time Janus Pannonius returned from his studies with Guarino in Ferrara (1451–58) the spirit of New Latin had spread as far as Hungary and with Gregory of Sanok (1406–77) to Poland. Iberia and England know nothing of Latin love. Individual poets had individual reactions to the ancient poets, to other contemporary Latin poets, but their poems in the vernaculars and in Latin for the most part inhabit separate worlds. Poets wrote different poems in different languages because they had different things to say to different readers.

The Renaissance of elegy began sensationally with *Hermaphroditus* (1425–6) by Panormita (Antonio Beccadelli, 1394–1471), dedicated to Cosimo de' Medici, which won the author praise and condemnation. Poggio said he had "roused from sleep the Latin Muses, who have been so long dormant"; Valla (before their inevitable quarrel) called him the best poet of the age. *Hermaphroditus* spread rapidly through humanist circles, attracting public burnings elsewhere. The new pope, Eugenius IV, is said to have threatened readers with excommunication. The more humane Cardinal Cesarini likened reading it to "searching for a precious stone in a dunghill."

Beccadelli was a pioneer in revitalizing the Latin epigram for its powers of abuse and louche eroticism, combining the comic realism of Goliardic poetry and Italian popular verse (*poesia giocosa*) with the language of Martial to explore the underside of the early Renaissance, including something of the daily world of the humanists: the poet hunting for copies of Martial (1.41) and Catullus (2.23) but having to hock his Plautus (2.29).

However, it is the poems about sex that have kept this collection infamous. Serviceable elegiacs revived the programmatic defenses of writing dirty poems taken from Catullus, Martial and Pliny (1.10, 1.20, 1.23, 2.11). The cast of characters is wide: a grotesque female love, Ursa, the embodiment of insatiable female desire; an ideal love, Alda, whom Beccadelli nevertheless needs to degrade; another named Lucia, threatened by sickness and childbirth; and miscellaneous unnamed others (gender not always specified). The "Epitaph for Nichina of Flanders, the Famous Whore" (2.30) and the concluding

“To His Book, That It May Go to the Brothel in Florence” (2.37), were destined to become anthology pieces.

And not just sex but sodomy. Mockery of active pederasts and attacks on the adult passives combine with celebration of the act and poems of seduction ostensibly written on behalf of friends. It is these that Beccadelli was at special pains to disavow later under pressure from Alberto da Sarteano and others in an elegy to Cosimo (c. 1435).

Beccadelli’s brutal directness proved a dead end. Erotic themes could now be explored with the blessing of the ancients but poets were more careful of their expression and content. (Only Pacifico Massimi, c. 1410–c. 1505, seemed unaffected and continued to write more openly obscene and pederastic verse: Daude 2008). The subject matter moved from sex to love, the mode from satiric to celebratory, the model from Martial to Propertius. And not just love but marriage. Many poets thereafter included their wives in their *Amores*. “This new and deeply humane approach [to] love poetry ... constitutes a most valuable enrichment of humanist literature” (IJsewijn and Sacré 1998, II: 81), indeed a new (and still rare) theme in western poetry.

The first real stirrings of love elegy were written by Giovanni Marrasio (1400/4–52), a friend of Beccadelli in Siena (with whom he permits himself a little bawdry). The nine elegies of his *Angelinetum* (1429; dedicated to Bruni) declare his love for Angelina Piccolomini (Resta 1976). They are rough, uninspired, and occasionally faulty. To modern readers they seem fairly conventional (6: a “carpe diem”), but they were highly praised and widely circulated. Their theme “Only Angelina gives inspiration and talent” (7.34) is the first blending of Petrarchan with Propertian elegiac themes.

Several of these ideas were taken up by Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405–64) in his *Cinthia*. Only seven of the nineteen elegies deal with Cinthia, but there are clear Propertian echoes beyond the name (Charlet 1997).

The future pope took his fellow elegist, Giovannantonio Campano (1429–77) into his entourage. Campano wrote eight books of poetry, mostly elegiac. The first book (containing poems written primarily between 1452–59 when the author was in Perugia) was modeled on Piccolomini’s *Cinthia* and focused on the beauty of a new love, called Diana, apparently as a commission by Braccio Baglioni for his mistress (showing the dangers of biographical readings). There are other scattered elegies addressed to the previous loves Candida, Silvia and Suriana (La Penna 1977, 264–66; Tateo 1998, 125–40; Beer 2007).

The works of Beccadelli, Marrasio, and Piccolomini in turn inspired Christoforo Landino (1425–98), whose *Xandra* (Sandra) was one of the most influential books of early elegy, not least by authorizing later poets to include other meters and a variety of topics under the heading. Landino started the three books in 1443 and variously reworked them till 1458. Much like Beccadelli’s *Hermaphroditus*, *Xandra* was meant to be an entry card to Medici patronage, and it won him the chair in poetry and rhetoric at the University of Florence. The early *Xandra* poems are formal and mix courtly love with the early (unsatisfied) stages of Propertius and Cynthia (2.4.2–10). The revision also followed Propertius’s path (in Book 4) in shifting towards patriotic (pro-Medici) elegy, now with Virgil as explicit model (Chatfield 2008; Pieper 2008).

Ugolino Verino (de’ Vieri; 1438–1516) modeled his *Flametta* (1458–63) on his teacher’s *Xandra*, but took his lover’s name from Boccaccio. Book I includes an amusing variation on Prop. 2.1 (1.13: his poetry has made Flametta *too* famous) and ends

with her marriage to another. Both books are marked by hymns to the wonders of modern Florence under the Medici (e.g. 1.20, 2.45). Grant (1965, 41) rightly noted a tendency to satire. Book II shows a willingness to skirt the edges of the disresponsible, e.g. pederasty, both for (2.19: the beard as a sign of the end) and against (2.10, 32, 38); or 2.12: "On a rustic who entered the brothel at Florence by mistake."

Alessandro Braccesi (1445–1503) also used *Xandra* for his *Amores* (written c. 1463–67; publ. c. 1477 and revised c. 1488), the first book of his poems, but unlike the distant longing in his model, this time the poet's love is consummated (1.17). The poems are a tad prolix, but he lets Flora tell her side of the story (1.19: Flora's prayers when she hears the poet is ill; 1.21: her fears of being abandoned), owing perhaps more to Sulpicia than Ovid. Similarly, in Book 2 of the *Carmina*, where, following Prop. 3.12, he ventriloquizes Argentina Malespina to her husband Piero Soderini.

Beccadelli's influence also continued in a new indirect way. In 1427, he copied and sent a manuscript of Propertius to his friend Giovanni Aurispa, who brought it with him to the court of the d'Este. Together with Guarino da Verona, they brought the themes of Propertian elegy to their students. These young poets of Ferrara included Tito Vespasiano Strozzi (1424–1505), whose *Erotica* (1.1–7 begun in 1443) eventually totaled six books. His is a new voice in Latin, setting his own experience within and against the classical past. So *Erotica* 1.2 echoes Prop. 1.1, as Cupid makes the poet falls in love for the first time with Anthia, but the setting is Ferrara at the Palio on St. George's Day, and this precision in turn alludes to the day that Petrarch first saw Laura. Themes from Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace's love poems are given a local name and habitation. He has a gift for vivid pictures: of Ferrara (3.1), Pisanello (2.13), Cosmè Tura (4.30), a tumbled-down cottage for dirty afternoons (6.10), especially of animals: Anthia's runaway bunny (2.1, recalling Lesbia's sparrow), a parrot that goes on repeating its mistress's name after her death (6.11), and even a weasel (6.2). A modern edition is much needed (Mesdjian 1997, Benvenuti 2004).

Basinio da Parma (1425–57) came to Ferrara with Theodore Gaza. The twelve elegies of *Cyris* center on the poet's obsessive love for this Cynthia-like figure (Ferri 1925; Tateo 1987, 49–50). His best and most original work was the *Liber Isottaens* (c. 1449), three books of ten elegies each, in which the love of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta for his mistress (and ultimately third wife) Isotta degli Atti is transferred into a parallel universe of Ovid's *Heroides*, with letters between the lovers, Isotta and her father, and the poet and the two lovers. The shifting viewpoint also seems to be inspired by the Sulpicia cycle.

Propertius and these poets in turn influenced Beccadelli's friend Giovanni Pontano (1429–1503), who took over the direction of Beccadelli's Academy, the first of the Renaissance. Pontano was in many ways the best and most appealing Latin poet of the Renaissance (Gavinelli 2006, 408–9; Tateo 1987, 53–60, and 1998, 126). In prose he ranged over astronomy, philosophy, satire, and vivid dialogues; he was no less prolific and admired in poetry.

His early *Pruritus* ("The Itch," 1449) was directly inspired by Beccadelli's *Hermaphrodite*, but suppressed (and reused) in the more lyrical *Parthenopeus* (or *Amores*) in a variety of meters with a central character of Fannia. His greatest work in elegy is the three books of *De amore coniugali* (1480–84), which begins with an address to Elegy herself and his own epithalamium (1.2) to the love of his life, Adriana Sassone (whom he

addresses as Ariadna, not least because he is forced to abandon her so often for official duty). They end with epithalamia for his daughters. These poems show clearly not only how conventional forms were used to express new and personal sensibilities but also how new genres were created. For the first, a good example is 3.2 (“Natalem Domini sine me”), where he urges his wife to celebrate Christmas and New Year’s with all the old customs even though he must be away. For the second, Book II includes one of the most remarkable experiments in the history of Latin verse, in which the Neapolitan lullaby is recast into twelve Latin *neniae* (2.8–19), which freely draw on Catullan diminutives to weave hypnotic sound patterns. After Adriana’s death, she is present in all his poetry. In the *Baiae*, he even castigates her for leaving him so bereft (1.12, 1.13, 2.29). Yet he is human, and while he fills the countryside of Ferrara with gods, myths, and flowers in the *Eridanus*, he also confesses to an old man’s passion for the earthly Stella, and appeals to his wife’s spirit for understanding. The *Tumuli* (which turned Alexandrian epigram into the French *tombeaux*; Furno 2003, 172–76) include hers and his. The *Eclogues* (in hexameters) begin with the inset lament of Melisaeus (a name other poets then used for him) lamenting his lost wife. Even in the middle of *De hortis Hesperidum* (two books of georgics taking how to grow lemon and orange trees in Italy as his starting point), gathering fruit reminds him of similar times with Ariadna, whose premature death may have spared her much suffering (1.318–35; see Thurn 2002, Dennis 2006).

Meanwhile on the other side of the world, Callimachus Experiens (Filippo Buonaccorsi, 1437–1496), in flight from the crackdown on Leto’s Roman Academy (1468), settled in Krakow and produced a series of elegies and Catullan polymetra on a barmaid named Fannia. The themes are conventional (he counts kisses, and endows Fannia with a dead sparrow). The love was not unsatisfied (52, “On Fannia’s Breasts”), but he eventually marries her off to another. Buonaccorsi is excellent company. He shows wit in epigrams on sodomy and other pastimes, and tenderness in the elegies. A poem on love’s insomnia (9) will find sympathetic readers (Garfagnini 1987; Segel 1989, 36–82).

The revival of poetry in France really began with the arrival of Fausto Andrelini (c. 1462–1518?), another refugee from the Roman Academy. His cycle of four books of *Amores sive Livia* (Paris, 1490), from his student days, are copious and conventional. So is most of his output but his rival Girolamo Balbi thought it worthwhile to steal from him in between mutual accusations of unnatural vice.

Michele Marullo (1453–1500) of Constantinople, born in the year of its fall (as he said), lived as a peripatetic poet and mercenary. He was a pupil of Pontano and later married the humanist Alessandra Scala (1492). Many of his epigrams (in various meters) describe a long and hopeless love for a Neaera (45.6: “The first love and the last is Neaera”), a name taken from “Lygdamus” ([Tib.] 3.1–6). They have a Catullan sense of introspection, and his poems on love and exile are permeated with a haunting richness. Epigram 21 (“Has violas,” based on Rufinus A.P. 5.74) was translated by Ronsard and became an anthology piece. Scaliger (*Poetica* 6.4) disliked both him and his poetry (often a sign of what is worth reading; though he singles out Pontano and Marullo as the acknowledged exemplars of modern poetry at 5. *intro.*). Erasmus and others were disturbed by the Lucretian character of the *Hymni Naturales* (themselves modeled on Pontano’s *Urania*) but they and his love poems had considerable effect on Janus Secundus, Du Bellay, and Ronsard. Croce (1933, 472–77) and Sparrow (1960, 389–400) give sensitive readings; see Lefèvre and Schäfer, eds., 2008.

Another of Pontano's students, Jacopo Sannazaro (1458–1530) transformed European literature by inventing "Arcadia" in his prose romance of that name. In Latin he wrote the epic *De Partu Virginis* (gaining him the depressing title of "The Christian Virgil" and a place on many pious reading lists), the *Eclogae piscatoriae* (substituting anglers for shepherds), and twenty-four elegies in three books tinged with the knowledge of the passage of time (e.g., 2.9 on the ruins of Cumae). Sannazaro characterized his elegies as *miserabile carmen* "a song of woe" (3.2.59, cf. 3.2.41–42; from Virgil *Georgics* 4.514) and death is a fixed feature of the landscape (Putnam 2009). Only two of the elegies are devoted to love after a rather rambling and generic introduction: 1.3, where the poet imagines himself at his (unnamed) mistress's tomb and she at his, an artful blend of Propertius and Tibullus; and 2.8, a rather colorless birthday poem (cf. Tibullus 2.2). Both poems, however, speak of a single, life-long love.

Conrad Celtis (1459–1508), like Luder before him, called for humanistic studies in Germany (Ingolstadt in 1492) and summoned Apollo in a famous ode "to come from Italy with his lyre to Germany." After a tour of Italy (1487–89) and a life as a wandering professor founding academies everywhere, he produced his major work in poetry: a series of four elegiac cycles, the *Amores* (1502): "The Four Books of *Loves* Corresponding to the Four Sides of Germany," illustrated by Dürer and others. Each book is devoted to a different love affair. The first ("boyhood" and the East) is with Hasilina "Little Hasa" in Krakow; the second ("adolescence," South) with Elsula ("Little Elsa") in Nuremburg; the third ("youth," West) with Ursula in Mainz; and the last ("old age," North) with Barbara in Lübeck. They feature some crudities of language and thought (e.g. 1.10; in the epigrams, *cunnius* and *mentula*, long banished, return), and various earthy adventures (Hasilina, the most fully realized of the characters is promiscuous and married to an old man whom she ultimately refuses to leave; 1.13, 2.6: both Hasilina and Elsula cheat on the poet with priests; 3.5: this time, his rival thinks the poet is the priest on an inside job; Celtis wisely leaps pantsless out of Ursula's window), but they are also a witty if misogynistic tour of women and their temperaments, as well as Germany and its customs: Tacitus' recently discovered *Germania* as done by Ovid, with some Horace, a strong dash of Propertius, and a good deal of Strozzi. Behind them lies a truly Renaissance fascination with system building: microcosm, numerology, astrology, and various metaphysical correspondences (Price 1992; Wiener, ed., 2002; Robert 2003).

Pietro Bembo (1470–1547) also wrote a few rather impersonal amatory elegies (10–15, 11 in a woman's voice), in one declaring his love for Lucretia Borgia (12). His Latin poetry gained the respect of Sannazaro, a tough audience, who called it "odoro e candido."

Girolamo Angeriano (of whom we know little) published 199 epigrams in elegiacs about his love for Celia. His *Erotopaegnon* ("Love's Toys," 1512, 1520) – riffs on themes from the Greek Anthology, Petrarch, and elsewhere – proved extremely popular and through reprints and anthology was a fertile source for Italian, French, German, and English poets (Wilson 1995). Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* draws frequently on him and "the rest of those *facete* modern poets," Strozzi, Secundus, and Capellanus.

Francesco Maria Molza (1489–1544) was the darling of the courts and the academies, a libertine, a picaro, and a cad. He abandoned his wife and children, was disinherited, sponged off his son, and ultimately died of syphilis (Celtis' fate as well). He was also the grandfather of the Latin poet Tarquinia Molza (1542–1617). Paolo Giovio said,

“He pursued both Minerva and Venus recklessly,” and Giraldis hoped for great things from him “even though he seems a little too crazy about love affairs with women.” His fellow poet Marcantonio Flaminio (*Carmina* 2.19) claimed he deserved the praise of Tibullus and Petrarch combined. He wrote erotic and pederastic *novelle* in Italian (Molza 1869), followed Petrarch in sonnets, and contributed to the pastoral with *Ninfa Tiberina* (dedicated to the famous courtesan Faustina Mancini). For all his lurid life, his published Latin poetry can be erotic (1.2, developing a theme by Cotta) but is never obscene. Elegies are dedicated to a Furnia (1.2–4; 1.3 “On Furnia’s Hair,” singled out for praise by Giovio), a Cinnama (1.9, a favorite name of Pontano), a Iulia (4.5), and a Lycoris (1.7–8, 3.4). One especially tender elegy attempts to console Lycoris for having to cut her long hair during a fever (2.9). There is the conventional complaint against the blocking figure of the old woman (4.2), and more daringly a prayer to Venus to keep his boy-toy, Apis, always young and hairless (1.5, altered to a girl in most later editions and anthologies). Two Latin works became very well-known, his supposed deathbed address to his comrades (3.9, which owes something to Villon) and a volley in the religious propaganda wars: a new addition to the *Heroides* from the abandoned Catherine of Aragon to Henry VIII of England (2.8), to which Janus Secundus wrote the reply (*Sylvae* 10). Croce (1933, 461) rightly singles out “his concrete imagery and vivacious colors.”

Buonaccorsi and Celtis while in Poland influenced the next generation. Andrzej Krzyski (Cricius, 1482–1537), after study in Bologna, eventually became Primate of Poland but was in his youth a member of the club of *Bibones et Commendones* (Boozers and Gourmands). He produced some very salacious verse, in both Galliardic rhyming (another Villon-like disposal of a friend’s affects and body) and classical meters (epitaph for the whore Zoffka). The spirit of Beccadelli returned for a last hurrah. Meanwhile in Vienna, his countryman, Jan of Gdańsk (Dantiscus, 1485–1543) made his contribution, a love elegy entitled *Grynea* (1511), the supply of divine epithets to use as pseudonyms having run low.

Jean Salmon Macrin (1490–1557) earned the title of the “French Horace,” deservedly boasting that even as Horace brought Greek lyric to Italy so he brought Catullus and Horace into France. He looked also to Marullo and Petrarch for the diction of his love poetry, which is marked with vivid sensory evocations (Ford 2010, 81–90). He recognized a kindred spirit in Pontano and, like him, made his wife, Guillone Boursault, the Gelonis of his poetry: *Epithalamiorum liber* (1528–1531) and *Carminum libri quatuor* (1530). Only two of the poems are in elegiacs: *Epithal.* 25 (an epigram) and 26, where Macrin, following convention, complains of his lover’s hardness of heart – but only because his wife is leaving to visit her father. As Moss (2003, 266) sensitively notes: “Macrin remained true to her and not to the imagined creature he had constructed so alluringly out of the words of classical and Italian Humanist poets.”

With Janus Secundus from Den Haag (1511–1536) we reach the most influential of the neo-Latin poets. His *Basia* (*Kisses*), nineteen variations on the theme of the kiss for a Neaera (with starting points in Catullus and the Greek Anthology), take on the metaphorical quality of Donne working out all the possibilities of a single idea. Secundus acknowledges his inspiration in Marullo, not only in the choice of Neaera for his lover’s name, but in a delicate epigram (1.32: he returns a friend’s copy; not a verse was lost but a treasure was taken). The *Basia* were widely admired, read, translated across Europe. Montaigne ranked him with Boccaccio and Rabelais (*Essais* II.10, a telling trio); Goethe

in a youthful poem (1776) hailed him as “Dear, holy, great Kisser” (“Lieber, heiliger, grosser Küsser.”)

Secundus has continued to attract a considerable body of modern scholarship (Schoolfield 1980; Endres 1981; Endres and Gold 1982; Godman 1985 and 1990; Price 1996; Murgatroyd 2000; Guillot 2005). In the first two books of the *Elegies*, the classically-trained ear catches tunes from Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius (*Elegies* 2.1, 3.3), as well as Horace, combined with vivid metaphors, and familiar scenes reimagined. The first book is entitled *Julia* (probably 1528–32) with a narrative modeled on Propertius Book 1 (the title *Monobiblos*, like Propertius’ own, is due to an editor) but owing more to Ovid’s *Amores* (*Elegies* 1.2.61–62). It opens with the now standard *recusatio* of war and epic but with the poet already a willing recruit to Cupid (1.1) and Cupid claiming the new-born boy for his own (1.2; inserted later in 1534). Grant (1965, 43) singled out 1.3 (*servitium amoris*, slavery of love) as “one of the poems that anyone doubtful of the intrinsic value of Renaissance Latin literature should most certainly read.” Janus surrenders to the *militia amoris*, suffers, and eventually loses Julia to marriage with a rival (as did Verino with his Flametta). The theme of love is explored more broadly in Book 2, which opens with an evocation of the ghost of Propertius. In *Elegies* 2.2: Little Venus (Venerilla) is late for an assignation and the poet is consumed with jealous imaginings; 2.3: fire and ice; 2.4: a witty conceit on Anacreon 358, where Lydia hits him with a snowball; 2.5: Neaera (from the *Kisses*) is hardhearted and promiscuous although the poet keeps describing her as chaste; 2.8: an address to his bed empty of Julia or Neaera; 2.9: an evocation of erotic sleep; 2.10: an epithalamium for a friend (a favorite genre for poets: IJsewijn and Sacré 1998, II, 100). The third book is more miscellaneous. In an interesting, if somewhat muddled, poem (3.7), the poet has a dream where *Elegy* herself appears apparently split into twins, the one sad with cypress, the other glad with myrtle. (In his model, Ovid *Amores* 3.1, the choice is between *Elegy* and *Tragedy*). Erotic *Elegy*, the only one to speak, is a Italian girl (“Italy remains our only fatherland”), and she lists the new poets: Pontano, Strozzi and his son, Marullo, Bembo, Sannazaro, plus Marco Girolamo Vida (1485–1566, more famed for the *Christiad* and *Scacchia Ludus* “The Game of Chess”), and Secundus’ teacher Andrea Alciati (1492–1550, author of the *Emblemata*). The *Epigrams* are more in the spirit of Martial, with some sexual raillery, but never outright obscenity (though Cassanova claimed that at eleven he improvised an answer to Secundus’ ribald riddle, epig. 73: “Discite grammatici”).

By the time of the youth of Théodore de Bèze (1519–1605), fierce cultural winds were rattling the sheltered bower of new Latin poetry. Its pseudo-pagan play and eroticism had attracted attack from the beginning, and it is noticeable how many of the earlier collections begin with not just a dedication but often a defense and apology (beginning with Beccadelli; so, Landino, Verino, Braccesi, Pontano for *Parthenopaeus*, often with the excuse of youth). Now however, the Protestant rebellion and Catholic reaction increased the danger. Bèze’s *Poemata* of 1548, often faulty, later redacted, and partially disowned (2nd ed. 1569), contained a book of *Elegies* about an affair with Candida that invokes the holy trinity of elegists: Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid. *Elegy* 3 surprisingly features a married lover, Publia; 6 is a long conceit on the storms of love; 7, a dark and disturbing dream of dying to protect Candida from rape; 9 and 10 borrow themes from Molza: the blocking old woman, and Candida has cut her hair (the reason is not given; Bèze adds the story of the Coma Berenices). The elegies’ air of realism is continually

undercut: while addressing the absent Publia, he suddenly realizes that, of course, she can't hear him or read his poem. In 4, he quarrels with a friend for failing to see Candida's itemized perfections. At times he is Jacques' lover in *Much Ado*: he has "a woeful ballad / Made to his mistress' eyebrow" (epigram 68) and her foot (73). Solicitude for her health in 71 is merely the set up for the pun of calling her Pallida; 67: an exchange of Latin puns; 78 gives her jaundice; 85 sends her on her way, pregnant.

However, none of the poems caused him as much grief as Epigram 90, where he has difficulty choosing between the two people he loves most in the world, Candida and his friend Audelbert. His Catholic enemies were quick to charge him with sodomy, and his case was not helped by the ending of the next poem, a fairly conventional diatribe against marriage in an exchange between Ponticus and Cornelius (1): "If there is a path to a happy life, / It doesn't lie between a woman's buttocks" (*femineas iuxta non latet illa nates*); Cornelius replies (92) that he prefers virtue's "narrow path" (*stricta via*). The old defenses of Catullus and Martial (a poet's poems are not his life) were of no use anymore. His theological foes claimed that the loose Candida was really his wife or a certain Claude, wife of a tailor of Paris, and he himself was a pimp or sodomite. Bèze spent the rest of his life denying the charges and apologizing for the poems (Prescott 1974; Summers 2001, xxviii–xxxiv).

The place of Joachim Du Bellay (c. 1522–60) in the history of French and world literature is high but paradoxical. He championed French as a literary language but urged French poets to take up Latin words and Latin genres. He said translation was corruption but turned *Aeneid* IV into the vulgar. He mocked Latin verse composition but was one of the outstanding Latin poets of his age. The further paradox is that he is most "classical" in his French sonnets and most "personal" in his Latin elegies (Nichols 1979, 1).

Before leaving for Rome, Du Bellay on behalf of the Pléiade published the *Déffence et illustration de la langue françoise* (1549) and his first book of sonnets, *Olive*. He returned from four years in Italy with a influential mass of work: the *Regrets*, *Antiquités de Rome*, *Divers Jeux Rustiques*, and the Latin *Poemata*, divided into sixty-seven epigrams, *Tumuli* (inspired by Pontano), eight elegies (plus an eclogue), and the thirty-three poems of the *Amores*. The first elegy, "Cur intermissis gallicis latine scribat" ("Why he has put French aside to write in Latin"), takes the image of the poet swept from the safe harbor of French out into the wild Tyrrhenian sea. The early elegies give us a wonderful panorama of Rome with St. Peter's dome still rising, the statues of the Vatican galleries, the arts of her courtesans, the ruins of her monuments, the immortality of her language (2). He returns to this theme in the most famous of these poems, *Patriae Desiderium* (7, "Homesickness"): "Latium demands it; this is the tribute you owe to the Roman tongue; the genius of the place compels it." There are elegies in praise of Jean Morel (5; and epigrams on his learned daughters: 62–4). Like Pontano, he creates his own myths: the etiology of a fountain (8) or Father Tiber welcoming the French ambassador, a charming narrative masque (3).

The *Amores* tell a somewhat wild and ribald *novella* in verse (Hawkins 2004). After three celibate years in Rome, the poet finally has an affair with Faustina, married to an old and impotent man. He in revenge abducts Faustina and locks her away in a nunnery. The poems only gradually reveal the story. Poem 1 (in hendecasyllables: based on Catullus 1) gives the theme and contrasts his passion with his friend Gordes's more brotherly love. He sounds again the theme "robbed of her, I'm robbed of my talent" (2) which Marrasio's *Angelinetum* initiated for Renaissance Latin.

There is much wit and humor in these poems. In 3 he threatens to storm the convent; in 4, a variation of the *exclusus amator*, with the husband within and the lover without. In 9, he dreams of dressing up as a nun, praying the offices with Faustina, then returning to her cell, there to be priest of both Vesta and Venus. In 16, Faustina's beauty is so great it can make the College of Cardinals agree. Most are in elegiacs (19 in sapphics) and in a clever poem of Catullan hendecasyllabics (22) he says goodbye to "sad elegiacs" when Faustina is unexpectedly returned to him. Poem 23 on her kisses is independent of Janus Secundus. Poem 26 explains to a certain Fabulla, why he does not write *amatoria*, and how he differs from "those who reveal their love affairs to the public in overly lascivious books."

It is really only in Du Bellay that we see a poet working out similar ideas in both his vernacular and Latin poetry (Helgerson 2006, 18–26). He makes a French auto-imitation (*Antiquités* 4) of his Latin epitaph for Rome (*Tumuli* 1). Elegy 1 is the source for the sonnet *Regrets* 128, while *Patriae Desiderium* (7) informs much of the *Regrets* (especially 6–7, 10, 19–20, 24, 30–31, 40). His complex relation to the two languages is a theme he returns to often: the epigraph to the *Epigrams* casts French as his virtuous and fruitful wife, but Latin his mistress ("One is beautiful I admit but the other is more pleasing").

In *Amores* 24, he lists the great poetic loves of past and present and their poets in a continuous stream, drawing on Propertius (2.34.85–94) himself for precedent: Catullus + Lesbia, Tibullus + Delia, Ovid + Corinna, Propertius + Cynthia, Gallus + Lycoris, Pontano + Stella, Sannazaro + Nina (for only one poem: epigram 1.6 a variation on Catullus' kisses), Marullo + Neaera, Petrarch + Laura, Bèze + Candida, Macrin + Gelonis, Ronsard + Cassandra, Tyard + Pasithea, de Baïf + Mellina, and his own Olive. There is a continuity across time and language (Latin, Italian, and French). What is missing, of course, are the legendary lovers of the Middle Ages: no Guinevere, not Iseult, no Blanche-flor.

Petrus Lotichius (Lotz, 1528–60) explored the themes of the conflict among the Muses, Mars, and Venus, with classical purity and human emotion. The Muses came from teachers such as Micyllus, Camerarius, and Melanchthon, whose lives and deaths he sings. Mars he learned as a protestant soldier at the siege of Magdeburg. After the war, when he was a student in Wittenberg (1548–49), Venus appeared to him in the form of a woman he calls Claudia, whose image continued to haunt him. In Paris, he revised his war and love poems in his first book of *Elegies* with other verses (1551). He continued to roam, adding books and revising the earlier poems: Book II (France, 1553), Book III (Italy, 1556). The *Poemata* appeared posthumously in 1561, and *Opera Omnia* in 1563 with four books of *Elegies* and other poems. They continued to be printed, anthologized, and a sign of their status as new classics was the edition of Pieter Burman the Younger (1754) complete with commentary.

His visions and revisions give readers an opportunity to watch foul papers being fed into the smithy of the soul; though, like Auden, the foul was sometimes fairer (Auhagen and Schäfer 2001, 35–52). Lotichius transforms Tibullus, Ovid, Virgil, and himself. A single line can show the power of *imitatio* and that the goal of the Ciceronians was neither foolish nor impossible: *dum cava terrificis ictibus aera tonant* (*Eleg.* 1.2.8: "while the hollow bronze thunders with its horrifying crash"): cannons speak the words of Ovid (*Ars* 2.610, as Burman noted [1754, 1:9]). If I had to single out a characteristic, it is a magical ability to summon emotion by setting the scene. Book I opens on a note of cold and fear which permeates *Elegies* I, the "poems made out of my soldiering." The image

of sentry duty under a full moon (1.5), or a soldier's tale of salvation amid carnage by a human tie between enemies who both love the poetry of Jacopo Sannazaro, are indelible (1.10; both translated in Nichols 1979, 556–67). Or *carm.* 1.11 for a happier setting (his tribute to Horace's *Fons Bandusiae*).

Despite Lotichius' fame as a love poet (Opitz, *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey*, ch. 8, listed the elegists as Ovid, Propertius, Tibullus, Sannazaro, Secundus, and Lotichius), he wrote little on love. Book 2 of the elegies begins as the poet presents himself first as an eager recruit to Amor's army (cf. Secundus), but now a deserter, for having left his girl behind. Elegy 2.9 presents an odd dreamlike sequence where the poet sees a girl dressed in white, whom he mistakes for his old love or else her ghost, but she is destined to be his new obsession. Elegy 3.3 is equally odd: a vision after his departure of the death of this girl to whom the title (added later) gives the name Callirrhoe. Together with some Catullan polymetra they form two intersecting cycles (Schäfer 2001 and Keith 2001).

Like Ronsard, whom he met in Paris, Jan Kochanowski (1529–1584) was widely regarded as a master in both Latin and the vernacular. His two books of *Elegies* (reworked and expanded to four, 1584) show a clear, proud, individual voice, while parading his debt to the ancients and to contemporaries: Sannazaro, Strozzi, Lotichius (Głombiowska 1978). Love for Lydia (under various names) has made him a poet (1.1). Elegy 3.13 is a call to leave Latin poetry for Polish, which speaks to anyone who has two hearts. For those (like me) who cannot read Polish, the way is greatly eased by Fiszman (1988), Segel (1989), and Żurawska (1994).

Much of the energy of Catholic Europe was drained to feed the Counter-Reformation. We enter the age of the Jesuit poets. Protestants refused to yield the field of humanist Latin, but personal love elegy was too fraught a genre for poetic *lusus* "fooling around" on either side (IJsewijn 1990, I: 83). Men wrote to, for, as women, but what of the women themselves? Even with a model in Sulpicia II (married but erotic), be they as chaste as ice, they would not escape calumny. Better leave it to the vernacular and professionals like Gaspara Stampa and Veronica Gambara.

Latin love elegy did not disappear, of course. As late as 1773 Laurens van Santen (1746–96), the editor of Catullus, published his *Ida: Lusus poeticus* (1773), five elegies with nothing new to say and ending in an unpleasant boast of victory. Anthologies of the Latin erotic or amorous verse of the previous ages remained a publishers' staple: *Poetae Tres Elegantissimi*, 1582, 1595 (Merullo, Angeriano, Secundus); *Veneres Blyenburgicae: sive Amorum hortus*, 1600 (thematically arranged for the poet or lover stuck for a line); *Amoenitates poeticæ*, 1779; *Quinque illustrium poetarum*, 1791; *Erotopaegnion: sive Priapeia veterum et recentiorum*, 1798.

Neo-Latin poetry continued, and in a broad stream, but without depth. Bayle proclaimed "its last sighs" in 1784. Boileau mocked it (to Dr. Johnson's irritation), but he did so in Latin verse. The elegiac couplet remained the workhorse of the Renaissance and Baroque, the best medium for thanking one's patron, congratulating one's friends, contributing to volumes, prefaces, birthdays, triumphs, and tombstones. But love found its place in the vernacular, especially the sonnet that the founder of humanism had himself founded.

"Elegy is the form of poetry natural to the reflective mind. It *may* treat of any subject, but it must treat of no subject *for itself*; but always and exclusively with reference to the poet himself."

(Coleridge, *Table Talk*)

The sense of self is never far away in the new elegists. At their best they can convey that sense of immediate access to the poet's mind that is the hallmark of Catullus and Propertius. Not for them the *così fan tutte/i* of Horace, nor, for all his centrality, Ovid's irony and parody. Far from Latin as a barrier to self-expression, Latin was a place of freedom. It is French, says Boileau, that is formal and chaste (*L'art poétique*, 175–80). This can lead to what is still a strongly biographical approach, attempting to discover chronology, separating real from fictional mistresses, with the dark clouds of sin and sincerity on the horizon.

The new elegists treated the themes of the ancients: fidelity, infidelity, rivals, bawds, quarrels. Love was usually unhappy. This fit the ancient models as well as the necessities of poetry (only unhappy lovers have the time to write) but also the conventions of courtly love (underappreciated, I think, in the scholarship) and Christianity. The elegist can portray himself as a true man of the world, but the pose of hopeless lover also leaves him free from moral censure. (This is very clear, for example, in Marullo, while Hagen, Lotichius' posthumous publisher, hastens to assure readers that his friend's life was pure; Zon 1983, 103–4, 235.)

In his perceptive introduction, Nichols (1979, 5) singles out the pervading sense of separation in space and time: in space from one's mistress, in time from one's muse. Elegy is naturally acquainted with separation, regret, loss, time, death. Readers find little of Christian consolation. Thus, the theme of exile is prominent, not just in the wanderers such as Marullo, Du Bellay, Buonaccorsi, Celtis, or Lotichius, but in all those who felt their time was out of joint. Latin was the language of exile, not just because of Ovid (and we must remember that for the Renaissance, even when writing love elegy, Ovid was primarily the poet of *Tristia*, *Ex Ponto*, and *Heroides*), but precisely because it was not the poet's native tongue.

The Muse had to be summoned, across space and across time. Elegy was an attempt to close that distance. In many ways their Latin verses are themselves analogs of the resplendent robes that Machiavelli donned to read the ancients. The elegiac world was a *studiolo*, an intimate space in which to show and share with one's friends rare and precious objects, such as a manuscript of Propertius or one's heart.

FURTHER READING

The best orientations to the vast field of Neo-Latin poetry remain Grant 1965: 27–64, the introduction to Nichols 1979 (below under anthologies), and two older articles: Sparrow 1960 and Spitzer 1955. The essential guide is IJsewijn and Sacré 1990 and 1998 (especially 1998, II: 80–85, “Elegiac Poetry”).

More and more of these once rare works are becoming available on the web (though Google Books is spotty and tortuous). Four invaluable sources:

- *Poeti d'Italia in lingua latina*: <http://www.mqdq.it/mqdq/poetitalia/>.
- *CAMENA – Corpus Automatum Multiplex Electorum Neolatinitatis Auctorum*: http://www.uni-mannheim.de/mateo/camenahtdocs/camena_e.html. With further links to Dutch, German, and Italian collections.

- *The Philological Museum* by Dana F. Sutton: <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk>.
- *Iter*, the best starting point for bibliography, requires a subscription: <http://www.itergateway.org/>.

See also *Bibliographie internationale de l'Humanisme et de la Renaissance* and *Humanistica Lovaniensia/Journal of Neo-Latin Studies*.

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CHAPTER 30

Modernist Reception

Dan Hooley

Roy Gibson begins a recent summary essay on Roman subjective love elegy (2007) by quoting Quintilian:

We also challenge the supremacy of the Greeks in elegy. Of our elegiac poets Tibullus seems to me to be the most terse and elegant. There are, however, some who prefer Propertius. Ovid is more sportive than either, while Gallus is more severe. Satire, on the other hand, is all our own ...

(Quintilian *IO* 10.1.93; Butler, tr. Cambridge, MA 1961)

This is a good place to start, in fact, not only in order to sketch out the generic territory but also to get a little into the head of Quintilian, whose partial reception of these poems is informed and filtered by his own disciplinary interests and circumstances. The passage comes immediately after his fawning encomium of Domitian, setting him up as a master poet of the ages, which may be relevant if literary parochialism shares some ground with literature's politics. Quintilian's mind, thinking Roman, perhaps not entirely poetic, thoughts (or is he happy, with *that* out of the way, to get back to literature?), turns next to the distinctly Roman genres, elegy and satire. To "challenge [the supremacy of] the Greeks" (*Graecos provocamus*) in elegy asserts Roman cultural *imperium* and suggests that Quintilian sees both languages operating in the same, or very similar, generic field. That is not how later critics have seen elegy, whose Greek origins they will trace to New Comedy, Hellenistic epigram, Hellenistic elegy, and maybe archaic love poetry, without finding any precise analogue in Greek to what these singular Romans wrote. The elegiac meter alone covers lots of territory, and Quintilian may simply have been referring to this. On the other hand, satire comes hard on the heels of this quick sketch of elegy: *satura quidem tota nostra est*, "satire is entirely our own." The statement cannot mean

what it is frequently interpreted as meaning, that Rome invented satire. Like elegy, satire's roots go far and variously back into Greek. The statement has got to mean, rather, something like "our satiric adaptation of the dactylic hexameter has a distinct and defining Romanness, 'ours' because we have made it so," and that is true of elegy as well.

Arguably, the proximity of elegy and satire in Quintilian's paragraph matches, in this last respect, a conceptual proximity as well. Both genres, while radically different in thematic character and mentality, find their defining moment near and within the Augustan settlement (Horace, not Lucilius, really creates *Roman* satire [Hooley 2007, 28]), and both craft novel literary spaces within the discourse of Roman sensibility and increasingly oppressive, or directive, power. Both flourish relatively briefly, though elegy had a much shorter run; neither stays dead, however, both enjoying a long and healthy receptive afterlife. Horace, Persius, Juvenal, Gallus, Propertius, Tibullus, Lygdamus, Sulpicia, and Ovid were on to something.

What that "something" is goes beyond memorable achievement in their respective genres and has to do with why Cicero didn't much like Catullus' brand of poetry, why Maecenas was always pushing his elegists to write something "bigger" and more responsible, why Propertius didn't get along with his Maecenian stablemate Horace, why Horace wrote himself into a canny and coy Augustanism, why Persius does not mention but writes all around Nero, why Juvenal speaks ill only of the dead, and certainly why Augustus sent Ovid packing. Both genres have an elusive edge, not overtly critical of the power structures all around them, but always potentially insubordinate or awkward, distracting, irritable, irritating, off message. In precisely this risky self-assertion, both genres were also dangerously successful; educated and connected people read them, and the poems therefore mattered in ways that may seem remote to a modern student. Hence, we could read elegies or satires not as if they were merely poems of certain types in a certain Roman place and time, the "merely" literary expressions of gifted poets, fascinating in their newly inventive play with persona and psychic experiment, but as literary "essays," trials – tense, charged, full of fine bravado but supremely self-conscious and at bottom just a little insecure – sent out into an unstable and possibly dangerous discursive landscape.

One could carry all this too far; satire and elegy differ in more ways than they are similar. Yet what Quintilian may have felt in collocating them – beneath their hides of generic descriptors, normative features, and conventional topoi – is part of the burden each carries forward into its post-classical reception, though not always recognized and certainly not kept to the same socio-historical terms. We will see it emerge again later in Pound. But one point of singular *divergence* between the genres' receptive histories occurs early on: while Horace, Persius, Juvenal, and to a degree Martial are repeatedly picked up, translated, imitated, revised from the middle ages on through a remarkable efflorescence in the eighteenth century as exemplars of "Roman verse satire," Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid do not uniformly carry forward the subjective love elegy. Ovid's case is decisive. His comprehensive attainment and experiment across genres meant that subsequent writers had access to a massive range of adaptable material, most of it not properly elegiac. He was quickly bifurcated into the "love poet" and the author of a great mythological epic, the latter side receiving most receptive attention, from Traube's *Aetas Ovidiana* (11th–13th centuries) onward. Other aspects of his work, the *Fasti*, exilic poetry and *Heroides* also offered durable models for later attention, and his elegiac

meter was frequently adapted in the middle ages for religious themes and other non-classical applications. But most receptive histories of Ovid will rightly feature the *Metamorphoses*, certainly the most popular of classical texts in subsequent centuries (Martindale 1988, Rand 1963, Lyne 2002, Dimmick 2002, Kennedy 2002). Propertius nearly drops away entirely until the 12th century and then is picked up sporadically, with primary regard, as in the case of Tibullus as well, coming from early to middle humanist scholarly and textual work and neo-Latin and Italian vernacular imitations (Gavinelli 2006, Benediktson 1989). Petrarch, Salutati, Politian, Strozzi, Piccolomini, and Boccaccio among several others played important roles. The love poets and Catullus were frequently treated together as a group in the Renaissance, but also (recalling Quintilian) were at times associated in florilegia with Petronius, Juvenal, Persius, and Martial; hence, a little dangerous and “adult” and often excluded from educational curricula (Gavinelli 2006, Dimmick 2002). The Italian Renaissance is the first post-classical period when the genre may be seen again as a recognizable set of conventions, and it was widely imitated throughout the 15th century. In Anglophone literatures, elegy emerges slowly, but breakouts like Marlowe’s translation of Ovid’s *Amores* (posthumously published in 1599) and other versions and/or allusions from Jonson, Heywood, Sedley, Rochester, Oldham, Dryden, and others, several specimens of which were collected in Tonson’s *Miscellany* of 1684, reflect persistent English interest through the latter 17th century. That interest began to wane in the eighteenth century, when, in terms of published translations and imitations, Propertius goes virtually unnoticed. There is, however, a translation of Tibullus that appears in 1720 (John Dart), and the Scotsman James Grainger published his *A Poetical Translation of the elegies of Tibullus; and of the poems of Sulpicia* in 1759. The note often struck is the rustic contentment of the popular 18th century *beatus ille* tradition, wherein Tibullus often found place alongside the likes of Martial 10.47 and Horace *Epodes* 2:

Me humbler Scenes delight, and calmer Days;
 A tranquil Life fair Poverty secure!
 Then boast, my Hearth, a small but cheerful Blaze,
 And Riches grasp who will, let me be poor.
 Nor yet be Hope a Stranger to my Door,
 But o’er my Roof, bright Goddess, still preside!
 With many a bounteous Autumn heap my Floor,
 And swell my Vats with Must, a purple Tide.
 My tender Vines I’ll plant with early Care,
 And choicest Apples, with a skillful Hand;
 Nor blush, a Rustic, oft to guide the Share,
 Or goad the tardy Ox along the Land.
 (Tib. 1. 1. 5–16)

On the other hand, in the late 1720s and early -30s, George, Lord Lyttelton, who translated Tibullus in the same strain (1.1), also captured some of the livelier sentiments of Sulpicia, freely adapting 3.17 (4.11) and here, 3.13 (4.7):

I’m weary of this tedious dull deceit;
 Myself I torture, while the world I cheat.

Tho' Prudence bids me strive to guard my flame,
 Loves sees the low hypocrisy with shame;
 Love bids me all confess, and call thee mine,
 Worthy my heart, as I am worthy thine;
 Weakness for thee I will no longer hide;
 Weakness for thee is woman's noblest pride.

Other 18th century appearances by elegists are spotty. Ovid appears in a few allusions, imitations, and burlesques (of the *Ars Amatoria*, "The Poet Bantered: or Ovid in a Visor" [anon., 1702]), and the "Elegy on the Death of Mr. Alexander Pope" is drawn from *Amores* 3.9 on Tibullus.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, even when elegiac reception in creative work seemed to slow, elegies, sometimes censored, were read in schools and universities, and scholarly attention persisted through a steady stream of editions and commentaries. Mathilde Skoie observes that the 18th century gives us the first scholarly commentary (Heyne's, three editions between 1755–98) that gives Sulpicia a "room of her own" (a space reflected too in the title of Grainger's 1759 translation noted above):

The Sulpicia poems are mentioned in the title, given a separate preface, and even visual room in the form of a depiction of Sulpicia herself. Heyne is also one of the first to question the Tibullan authorship of the poems and the very first to suggest that these poems might have been written by an Augustan Sulpicia.

(Skoie 2002, 111)

Skoie goes on to observe a general movement in the later 18th century "from Aufklärung (Enlightenment) to Einfühlung (sensitivity); a move towards the personal" and that Heyne himself wrote elegies in the style of Tibullus (Skoie 2002, 160–1). Heyne's interest in elegy is of course famously echoed in Goethe's *Römische Elegien* (1795), where nods to Tibullus appear alongside borrowings from Propertius, Horace, and Catullus. Apropos of Goethe, Postgate's 1885 selection makes note of an entry in Goethe's diary for Nov. 28, 1798: "The Elegies of Propertius, of which I have read the greater part in Knebel's translation, have produced an agitation (Erschütterung) in my nature, such as works of this kind are wont to cause: a desire to produce something similar which I must evade, as at present I have quite other things in view" (Postgate 1885, cxlvii–cxlviii, Pucci 1998, 167–70). Another editor, Kirby Flower Smith, of Tibullus, points out this poet's popularity in 18th century France, particularly in the imitations of La Harpe, Lebrun, Loyson, Andrieux, and Bertin. De la Chappelle wrote a romance on Tibullus' life, *Les Amours de Tibulle* (Smith 1913, 64–5).

The largely hellenophilic Romantic movement, however, seems not to have cultivated a widespread taste for the Roman elegists. As already noted, scholars, commentators, and educators all paid due attention to Sulpicia, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, and Chateaubriand was deeply affected by Tibullus (Conte 1994, 329); but imitative or adaptive work, particularly in English, seems rare from the late 18th through most of the 19th century. The translations of Propertius from the period, like those of Charles Elton and C.E. Moore, are tastefully uninspired. Norman Vance has discussed Ovid's Romantic and Victorian reception, chiefly in regard to the *Metamorphoses*, observing that Byron is the only figure to have taken aboard anything like an elegiac persona:

“bad, mad, and dangerous to know” in Lady Caroline Lamb’s words (Vance 1997, 157). Generally, Vance observes, Ovid was regarded “a degenerate in a degenerate age,” a technically facile versifier not unlike in these respects Pope and Dryden (Vance 1997, 156, 165). Of the 19th-century writers who made use of Ovid, Byron, Landor, Wordsworth, Swinburne, and Keats, most draw upon the *Metamorphoses* and show few signs of direct affinity to elegy. An exception is Wordsworth’s “Ode to Lycoris,” Gallus’ Lycoris standing for Wordsworth’s wife in the poem, which obviously draws upon a Romantic “sense” of elegy (Vance 1997, 169).

Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee my life’s celestial sign!)
When Nature marks the year’s decline,
Be ours to welcome it;
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
Before the path of milder suns;
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
Of the resplendent miracle ...

The dearth of interest in elegy throughout the 19th century can be ascribed to a number of factors. Richard Jenkyns explains one of them:

The romantics had encouraged a belief in something called genius, an almost palpable quality, utterly different in kind from even the highest talent. The greatest artists and statesmen thus became enveloped by an aura almost of sanctity, while the charm and value of minor art was underestimated. Ruskin wrote, “with poetry second-rate in *quality* no one ought to be allowed to trouble mankind. There is quite enough of the best.” Dr. Arnold refused to make any use at Rugby of such “second rate Latin poets” as Propertius: “Of all useless reading, surely the reading of indifferent poets is the most useless.”

(Jenkyns 1980, 78).

The serene and timeless achievement of Homer and the fifth-century Athenians as it was seen held sway for most of the century, eclipsing even Vergil. And even when the bold confidence in Victorian good sense and moral probity faltered, as it did occasionally throughout the period, writers like Ruskin, Swinburne, and Rossetti first turned to Greece for literary inspiration (with exceptions, as we will see). Roman elegy, strikingly inventive and psychologically daring as it seems to many modern readers, seemed both derivative and superficial – or merely entertaining in a Gilbert and Sullivanish sort of way:

High deeds of heroes to rehearse
I thought, in grave heroic measure,
When Cupid, laughing, clipped my verse
And bade me sing of love and pleasure.

Usurping boy! what right has he
To deal with poets as he chooses?

I'll start afresh, and let him see
 I'm not his servant, but the Muse's.

Alas! unnerved by shafts of love,
 To frame heroics I am ill able;
 In lighter measures I must move,
 I cannot rhyme in decasyllable.

(Ovid, *Am.* 1.1,

F.H. Hummel, tr. 1876)

Yet, in this last quarter of the 19th century, almost precisely two thousand years after Octavian assumed power, Rome would become relevant again. As Norman Vance has ably described it (Vance 1997, 247–68), the Decadent movement, broadly encompassing aesthetes, symbolists, and a range of *fin de siècle* writers and artists, expressed fascinated interest in Rome-in-decline as a parallel to their own sense of late-imperial England and France. For writers like Baudelaire, Swinburne, Wilde, and Huysmans, Rome's artistic life, seen apart from militarism and the stalwart exemplars of Republican virtue, took on an attractive poignancy. So too, Wilde's Neronian haircut typified a broader fascination with the artistic emperor, both reprehending and appreciative, and Nero's fusion of artistic sensibility with transgression, ambivalent sexuality, and indulgence found echo in some of the English period's most striking work. Thomas Couture's prescient painting, *The Romans of the Decadence* (1847), depicts a magnificent orgy set among the gravely disapproving statues of Seneca, Tiberius and others. Petronius, for similar appeals, found new popularity. In all this one might discern a move away from hearty Victorian political optimism to private worlds of apolitical imagination and indulgence not terribly dissimilar from the sensibilities of Catullus and his successors. Of the elegists, Ovid alone turns up fairly often, though chiefly as poet of the *Metamorphoses* and the exilic works, which had persistent appeal to the Romantic and Decadent imagination. Yet it is tempting to see traces of the elegiac mistress, and the poets' obsession with love, sensuality, beauty, and death in Swinburne's ghoulishly over-the-top *Faustine*, a fantasia on the subject of Marcus Aurelius' low-loving Faustina Minor:

If one should love you with real love
 (Such things have been,
 Things your fair face knows nothing of,
 It seems, Faustine);
 That clear hair heavily bound back,
 The lights wherein
 Shift from dead blue to burnt-up black;
 Your throat, Faustine,
 Strong, heavy, throwing out the face
 And hard bright chin
 And shameful scornful lips that grace
 Their shame, Faustine,
 Curled lips, long since half kissed away,
 Still sweet and keen;
 You'd give him – poison shall we say?
 Or what, Faustine?

(149–64)

Propertius seems to play a subtly influential role in the nineties, and several scholars comment on his impact on the Decadent poet much attached to Swinburne's verse, Ernest Dowson (Benediktson 1989, 132–3, Papanghelis 1987, 209–10). Dowson's friend Frank Harris commented on "his intimacy with the Latins, especially Propertius," while another friend Victor Plarr averred that "Dowson loved his Propertius" (Longaker 1945, 227, Adams 2000, 70). Traces of Propertius, quotations and more generally, have been described in several of Dowson's works, not least his well known (despite the Horatian title) "Non Sum Qualis eram Bonae Sub Regno Cynarae":

Last night, ah yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
 There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
 Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
 And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
 Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:
 I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.
(1–6)

Benediktson makes the connections, noting a resemblance to Prop. 4.8.43–48, the hopeless devotion to a mistress and "a lost, unregainable experience"; he concludes that "[t]here is a haunting, almost macabre, feeling about this poem, which some would attribute to Dowson's role in the decadence movement, but it is a decadence which derives from Roman poetry and especially from Propertius" (Benediktson 1989, 132).

Some would contest the idea of Propertius as model of Roman decadence, but from a distance of two millennia it might seem that the Augustan Propertius was already singing the death-song of empire, especially if one were turning away from public engagement to a private world of heightened, self-regarding emotion colored by fascination with eros and death. As is the case in Lionel Johnson's *Men of Assisi* (quoted in Rudd 1994, 131):

Are the spring roses round thine head,
 Propertius, as they were of old?
 In the grey deserts of the dead,
 Glows any wine in cups of gold?
 Not all the truth dead Cynthia told!

Other late 19th-century readers saw Propertius and the elegists in different, though finally not unrelated terms. "Great poets naturally bring small poets after them," wrote J.W. Mackail (whom Pound was to confuse with the Chicago Latinist William Gardner Hale) near the beginning of his treatment of the elegists in his 1895 history of Latin literature (Mackail 1909, 120). His verdict, placing Propertius and Tibullus particularly at the top end of second-rank Roman poets, reflects another aspect of the prevailing view. Mackail describes Tibullus as "Virgil without the genius": "the poems reveal a gentleness of nature and sincerity of feeling which make us think of their author less with admiration than with a sort of quiet affection.... not the outburst of passion, or the fruit of high imagination, but the natural and refined expression of sincere feeling in equable and melodious verse.... in delicacy, in refinement, in grace of rhythm and diction he cannot be easily surpassed" (Mackail 1909, 130–31). Propertius, on the other hand, enjoys full accolades for *his* genius ("a genius of great and, indeed, phenomenal precocity" [124]), but it is a genius of consummate technical facility and rhythmic

“sumptuousness.” Designating Book 1 a “literary feat equal to the early achievements of Keats or Byron” [124], places the poet in Mackail’s Victorian/Edwardian milieu. The gorgeous sound of Propertius that he observes, as opposed to the staccato shifts of logic, tone, and sequence of thought that he does not observe, aestheticizes Propertius, and Tibullus too; these are poets made of words: beautiful, genuine, graceful, delicate, refined. Yet Mackail does remark the connection to modernity others had seen: “The *Cynthia* is the first appearance in literature of the neurotic young man, who reappeared last century in Rousseau’s *Confessions* and Goethe’s *Werther*, and who has dominated a whole side of French literature since Alfred de Musset” (Mackail 1909, 125).

The remarkable impact of Ezra Pound’s adapted version, the *Homage to Sextus Propertius* of 1917–19, is silhouetted against this general background of Victorian and *fin de siècle* reception. And there *was* drama in its publication and ensuing reception. The first four sections were published in the March 1919 issue of Harriet Monroe’s *Poetry*; it received an immediate, urbanely negative reaction from William Gardner Hale in a letter to *Poetry* entitled “Pegasus Impounded” (*Poetry* 14 [1919], 52–5). Hale’s criticisms focused on the obvious errors in translation and even transcription. This was natural enough given the assumption that Pound was attempting some kind of translation, although it could not but be clear that it was of the selective type seen in Pope’s *Imitations of Horace*. *The New Age* shortly followed with an anonymous review of its own:

[The *Homage*] is very much alive, indeed more modern than the “Moeurs contemporaines,” and should be read, by those those who have no Latin, with the speed and gusto with which it was evidently written. Mr. Pound has developed the small germ of humour in Propertius – so small that no one else has noticed it – till it over-runs his whole work. The new Propertius does not balance his epithets like the old, he has changed his deep organ for the tongs and bones of *vers libre*; he is “swelled up with inane pleasantries, and guzzles with outstretched ears” (is this meant “to write him down as an ass?”), but “at any rate he will not have his epitaph in a high road” – Mr. Pound has seen to that.

(*The New Age* 25 [1919], 62, Sullivan 1964, 6–7)

The reviewer (despite having missed the satirical reference to hungry ears in Persius) went on in jauntily critical vein, taking up the spirit of Hale’s attack in dwelling gleefully on Pound’s mistakes, misreadings, and misperceptions, and concluding, “in spite of these delights, it is to be hoped that the shade of Propertius will not stray into Mr. Pound’s comic Elysium. That meticulous Alexandrian might not be altogether satisfied with his new liegeman’s ‘homage.’”

Pound’s response was, as usual, combative and sought to redirect attention from the translational blunders. The poem was, he maintained, not intended as a translation but a free rendering that sought to bring across certain salient elements of wit, irony, and subtle rhetorical play through which one could perceive an indicting correspondence between Augustan Rome and the years of the Great War:

I may perhaps avoid charges of further mystification and obscurity by saying that it presents certain emotions vital to men faced with the infinite and ineffable imbecility of the British Empire as they were to Propertius some centuries earlier, when faced with the infinite and ineffable imbecility of the Roman Empire. These emotions are given largely, but not entirely, in Propertius’ own terms.

(Sullivan 1964, 10–11).

Shades of Callimachus, Coan ghosts of Philetas,
It is in your grove I would walk,
I who come first from the clear font
Bringing the Grecian orgies into Italy,
and the dance into Italy.
Who hath taught you so subtle a measure,
in what hall have you heard it;
What foot beat out your time bar,
what water has mellowed your whistles?

(I. 1-6)

Shade of Callimachus and sacrifices of Coan Philetas,/ Pray grant *me* admission into your grove./ I enter first as a priest of a pure fountainhead/ To offer Italian mysteries in Greek dances./ Say in what grotto did you both refine your song?/ On what foot entering? What water drinking?

The mistakes and/or willful distortions of Propertius are evident even in these few opening lines. But clearly the poet's approach here is to dismantle any conventional notion of Propertius – that of scholars, Latin readers, or Victorian or Decadent poets. Pound could write gorgeous lines, so when he doesn't, as here, we look for other kinds of intentions. He dismisses the Latinists right away with the glaringly incorrect "Coan ghosts." And he disregards appreciators of Propertius' artistry and sound with free verse that rather clunks along, mixing registers of rhetoric meant not to jibe: "Bringing the Grecian orgies into Italy,/ and the dance into Italy./ Who hath taught you so subtle a measure ... What foot beat out your time bar,/ what water has mellowed your whistles?" In Propertius this is all programmatic language, channeling the flock of Callimacheans and Horace too at this point; Pound effectively makes a joke of it, building on that germ of parody he noticed in his model. He was not unperceptive in this: "what foot beat out your time bar" funnies up one side of the double sense of *quove pede* in Propertius, referring both to entering the poetic rites with propitious foot and right (or wrong?) meter. And certainly Propertius does, near the close of 3.2, echo Horace C. 3.30 conspicuously and perhaps parodically.

Pierrot is a frequent “voice” in Laforgue and the isolation of the sad, *Commedia dell’Arte* clown worked well to effect a certain kind of tempered irony. Eliot’s *Prufrock* represents one outcome of the impulse, the precious dandy’s awareness of its own inadequacy:

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, “Do I dare?” and, “Do I dare?”
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair —

Pound, even in his early, mannered work, did not write quite this way, but he was taken, as we have seen, with Laforgue’s control of language and his ability to twist a scene or image or sensibility out of its customary setting, or recast it in sometimes wan, satirical light: “I do not think one can too carefully discriminate between Laforgue’s tone and that of his contemporary French satirists. He is the finest wrought; he is the most ‘verbalist’” (Pound 1968, 280–4). In this judgment Pound seems to be a little too generous, but the satiric energy Pound noticed in Laforgue is closely related, especially in regards to satiric technique, to his reading of Propertius. Elegy could be construed as a mode of criticism – as Pound put it, criticism of the “ineffable imbecility of the Roman Empire,” and of those complicit in its message, *viz.*, Horace and Vergil (“Phoebus’ chief of police”). As such, it need not be too overt; rather it could employ the tools of parody, a certain kind of irony and misdirection. The reading is only partly a quirk of Pound’s idiosyncratic reception of Roman literature. The association of satire and elegy, both determinedly programmatic, both constructing rhetorical worlds apart from “reality” and from the encomiastic elements of the major genres, goes back to Quintilian, as we have seen, and it is plausible, as we have also seen, to read Propertius 3.2 as just such an instance of literary satire. It is interesting that although Propertius’ Book 4 begins to break down the critical distance Pound so prized, his repeated, laudatory notice of the “Ride to Lanuvium” (4.8) indicates that for this modernist, Propertius never really lost his soul.

“Satire” broadly construed seems to play a further, larger role in this modern reception. Pound’s manner throughout the *Homage* controversy was characteristic: dogmatic, unrepentant, by turns perceptive and imperceptive, defensive, aggressive, intransigent; qualities (too?) easily attributed to the problematic temperament of the man. All his commentary, however, is remarkable for its relentless focus on the *project* of reading Propertius; in “translating” the poet the way he did he was playing the bad boy with an objective.

[E]ven Professor McKail [for Hale?] might have suspected ... that this poet of later Rome was not steeped to the brim in Rossetti, Pater and Co., and that whatever sentimentality there was in Propertius’ juvenalia, it is not *quite* the sentiment of thirteenth-century Florence decanted in the tone of the unadulterated Victorian period.

(*New Age* 26 [1919] 82; Sullivan 1964, 8–9)

Pound was not just translating or writing poetry, but writing poetry *against*; against Rossetti, Pater, Victorianism, classical scholarship, and as he was later to say, imperialist, life-wasting war-making. The high literary modernism which he, Eliot, Joyce, Lewis, Beckett, and Yeats later were to headline – associated with a certain kind of cultural traditionalism, aestheticism, and in Pound and others’ cases, Fascism – is the grown up

version of a “movement” whose initially dominant impulses were subversive, alienating, and caustic. Pound’s *Propertius* was calculated to offend precisely those Pound thought needed offending – whether they “really” deserved it or not. He sends them off in the opening lines quoted above, or rather invites them to squirm as he takes apart *their* *Propertius*, getting it wrong and “wrong,” willy-nilly, for “wrong” was surely the point. This is modernism in the relational sense, not the embodiment of a set of qualities, formal preferences, attitudes, and allegiances but decisive reaction premised on a sense of crisis, the sense that the present was somehow critically different from the past. Whether that sense of crisis is Eurocentric, a western invention or is culturally pervasive is a matter of current discussion, but for Pound it was a felt reality. His flair for manifestoes, dogmatic pedagogy, and the promulgation of movements like Imagism and Vorticism all express his sense of a need for a new plan. Like many new planners, Pound made his schemes of old stuff reworked in a process that turns against the past even as it appropriates and feeds on it – almost a paradox, and in this and other respects his *Propertius* is an instance of the deep complication and conflicting energies of the modernist turn.

As a postlude to his treatment of the *Homage*, John Sullivan wrote a short chapter treating its influence on later versions (Sullivan 1964, 173–83). After dealing unsympathetically with translations by Jack Lindsay, S.G. Tremenheere, E.H.W. Meyerstein, and A.S. Way (of these, Lindsay’s is the freshest and most interesting), he spends more time with Yeats’ adaptation of Prop. 2.2.5–10 and Lowell’s 4.7. These are in fact the only significant versions one could call “modernist” in character, though among later translators (R. Musker 1972, R. I. V. Hodge and R. A. Buttimore 1977, W. G. Shepherd 1985, and G. Lee 1994) one sees traces of Poundian influence here and there. Yeats’s poem, antedating Pound’s *Propertius* by two years, is not terribly close in character to the *Homage*; it takes *Propertius*’ mythologized description of Cynthia’s beauty and strips away the mythical apparatus, leaving a touching if mildly quirky vision of Maude Gonne:

She might, so noble from head
To great shapely knees,
The long flowing line,
Have walked to the altar
Through the holy images
At Pallas Athene’s side,
Or been fit spoil for a centaur
Drunk with unmixed wine.

Lowell’s 4.7, on the other hand, from *Lord Weary’s Castle* (1946) cooks down his original, leaving a more strikingly concentrated brew of macabre imagery and lively passion:

A ghost is someone; death has left a hole
For the lead-coloured soul to beat the fire:
Cynthia leaves her dirty pyre
And seems to coil herself and roll
Under my canopy,
Love’s stale and public playground, where I lie

And fill the run-down empire of my bed.
 I see the street, her potter's field, is red
 And lively with the ashes of the dead:

She no longer sparkles off in smoke:
 It is the body carted to the gate
 Last Friday, when the sizzling grate
 Left its charred furrows on her smock
 And ate her hip.
 A black nail dangles from a finger tip
 And Lethe oozes from her nether lip.
 Her thumb-bones rattle on her brittle hands,
 As Cynthia stamps and hisses her demands ...

Lowell claimed to be influenced by Pound, even as he turned from Pound and back to Propertius:

I got him through Pound. When I read him in Latin I found a kind of Propertius you don't get in Pound at all. Pound's Propertius is rather an Ovidian figure with a great deal of Pound's fluency and humor and irony. The actual Propertius is a very excited, tense poet, rather desperate: his line is much more like parts of Marlowe's Faustus. And he's of all the Roman poets most like a desperate Christian. His experiences, his love affair with Cynthia, are absolutely rending, destroying.

(Perloff 1990, 131)

The remarks may strike one as odd, since 4.7 is one of Propertius' most Ovidian poems, Marlowe was one of Ovid's first and best translators into English, and, despite himself, Lowell may have put more than a little Ovid into his version. But what is said and what is done are often different things, and it is at least clear that Lowell's poem would not be quite as it is without Pound, Ovid, and the "excited, tense, and rather desperate" Propertius of the Romantics and Decadents. It is a remarkable version whose success helped along the cause of Lowell's later *Imitations*.

Propertius was at the heart of modernist reception of elegy, and it may not be too much to claim, as some have, that the rekindled academic interest in the elegists that has flourished so conspicuously from the mid-twentieth century on to the present can be traced in part to the formalist side of modernism's fascination with dense and difficult imagery, learned allusion, paratactic syntax, and associative logical structures. Propertius, Donne, and Pound hover close together in this literary constellation. Interest in the Alexandrian features of Propertius, shared with the other elegists and Catullus, might also be said to fall under the broad critical aegis of modernist aesthetics, whereas attention to gender issues and gender-construction and other postmodernist critical modalities have been taking elegy into new ground. In imaginative literature, Tibullus alone seems not to have found a notable place in the 20th century, though critical attention has not been wanting. And Ovid ... there seems always Ovid, but again in the past century, most creative, adaptive, and translational and adaptive work has found a home in the *Metamorphoses* and exilic works. Ziolkowski points out that Pound was a tireless advocate of Ovid and that Osip Mandelstam occasionally taps into the exilic works, or the model

of the poet in exile (Ziolkowski 2009, 455–56). Lowell too, in a much traveled selection of verse, imagines (Ovidian) exile with concentration and bitter poignancy (*Ovid and Caesar's Daughter* in *History* 1973):

“I was a modern, and in Caesar’s eye,
a tomcat with the number of the Beast—
now buried where Turkey faces the red east,
or wherever Tomi my place of exile was.
Rome asked for art in earnest; at her call
came Lucan, Tacitus and Juvenal,
the black republicans who tore the tits
and bowels of the Mother Wolf to bits...
Thieves pick gold
from the fine print and volume of the Colossus.
Because I loved and wrote too profligately,
Imperial Tiber, O my yellow Wolf,
black earth by the Black Roman Sea, I lie
libeled with the boy-crazy daughter of
Caesar Augustus who will never die.”

And another exilic poet, Joseph Brodsky, who in 1984 translated Mandelstam’s *Tristia* (1916), itself drawing on Ovid, particularly *Tr.* 1.3 (Brodsky 2000, 499–500), composed his *Roman Elegies*, apparently thinking of Goethe, in 1982. That is well past the period of creative modernist writing in the century, yet Brodsky’s intense, lyrical, disjunctive, and allusive manner recalls features of earlier 20th century verse and might serve to conclude this chapter. Not closely related to Roman models, the poems are melancholy meditations, bristling with suggestive images (“Everything has a limit, including sorrow./ A windowpane stalls a stare. Nor does a grille abandon/ a leaf ...”) that start, then break off thoughts. Only one of the “elegies” harks back (Elegy IX [Brodsky 2000, 278]):

Lesbia, Julia, Cynthia, Livia, Michelina.
Bosoms, ringlets of fleece; for effects, and for causes also.
Heaven-baked clay, fingertips’ brave arena.
Flesh that renders eternity an anonymous torso.
You breed immortals: those who have seen you bare,
they, too, turned Catulluses, statues, heavy
Neros, et cetera. Short-term goddesses! you are
much more a joy to believe in than a permanent bevy.
Hail the smooth abdomen, thighs as their hamstrings tighten.
White upon white, as Kazimir’s dream image,
one summer evening, I, the most mortal item
in the midst of this wreckage resembling the whole world’s rib cage,
sip with feverish lips wine from a tender collar-
bone; the sky is as pale as a cheek with a mole that trembles;
and the cupolas bulge like the tits of the she-wolf, fallen
asleep after having fed her Romulus and Remus.

This too is not (like) Roman elegy, but Brodsky’s evocative little masterpiece could not have been put to paper without it.

FURTHER READING

In general terms, literature on modernist elegiac reception (roughly the first third of the 20th century) is not thick on the ground. Modern Ovidian reception has been an active field since the work of Martindale (1988) and Ziolkowski (2005), though the *Metamorphoses* and exilic poems receive the greatest share of attention; but see the reception essays in Hardie (2002) and Knox (2009). Work on the reception of *Corpus Tibullianum* has been dormant but for Skoie's (2002) excellent work on Sulpicia commentaries. On Propertius, largely because of Pound, 20th century interest has been lively; see also Benediktson (1989), Günther (2006), and the closing pages of Johnson (2009).

On Pound: For fuller treatments of the *Homage*, see first Sullivan (1964), which remains indispensable. The text of Pound's *Homage* is revised (in collaboration with Pound) in Sullivan's edition and is therefore the authoritative text. Richardson (1947, 21–9) was one of the first positive reviews from a classicist. Others are Arkins (1988, 29–44); Thomas (1983, 39–58); Hooley (1988, 28–54). Rudd (1994, 117–58) offers a typically lucid and informative analysis, somewhat skeptical of Pound's success in the poem. The late Michael Comber's article (1998, 37–55), while more Propertius than Pound, is the most interesting recent treatment I've seen.

On Lowell: For his version of Propertius 4.7 and Propertius' influence on Lowell, see Talbot (2007, 130–47). Lowell's "Ovid and Caesar's Daughter" first appeared without that title as section 3 of *From the Alps*, a "middle period" work reflecting on Rome, history, Pius XII, his souring faith, and Ovid in the *Kenyon Review* in 1953, then was cut from the version published in *Life Studies* (1959), to John Berryman's chagrin. It was modified and reinserted for publication in *For the Union Dead* in 1964, then more substantially revised as a self-standing poem in *History* (1973). On Lowell's poem and other allusions to Roman poets see Doreski (1988, 47–59). Peter Knox read a yet-unpublished paper on the poem, "Inventing Exile: Robert Lowell's Ovid," at the "Ovid and Ovidianism" Conference at the University of Richmond, 2010.

On Modernism: The dynamics of modernism's complex, ambivalent misbehavior, political and otherwise and read with no blind eye to its association with imperialism, patriarchy, and elitism, has been under discussion for some time in English and modern language studies, frequently under the rubric of "new Modernism" with interesting links to post-colonialist theory. Among many others, see Mao and Walkowitz (2006) and the discussion of Friedman (2001).

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PART VIII

Pedagogy

CHAPTER 31

Teaching Roman Love Elegy

Ronnie Ancona

1. Introduction

Teaching Roman Love Elegy clearly takes many forms, depending on the interests of the instructor, the nature of the institution where teaching is taking place, the student population (level and demographics), and departmental or other programmatic requirements or guidelines. This essay will not tell you how to teach this subject. Rather, it will first provide touchstones for considering how this subject is taught and/or how it can be taught, then comments from my own teaching experience, and finally, some suggestions for new things to try in teaching. The essay is based on an informal survey of some members of my profession, my own teaching experience, and my own study of the field. It will, I hope, provide food for thought for those who want to know how elegy is taught, those just embarking upon such teaching, or those interested in comparing teaching practices.

I write this piece as an outsider of sorts, since Latin love elegy has not been a specialty in my own publications. An outsider sometimes can provide a perspective less invested in a particular point of view, and my hope is that this will be the case here. I have edited publications incorporating elegy: Ancona and Greene (2005), Bowditch (forthcoming), Miller (forthcoming), and Newlands (forthcoming), and have worked on various pedagogical issues pertaining to Latin, including the teaching of Catullus (Ancona and Hallett 2007), the teaching of Catullus, Horace, Cicero, and Ovid (Ancona 2007), and the development of standards for Latin teacher preparation (Little, Percy et al. 2010), and I have authored Latin textbooks as well (e.g. Ancona 2004 and Ancona 2005). That experience with pedagogy and Latin more generally undoubtedly informs what I present here.

What follows is based on my own thoughts and experience, and the shared thoughts and experience of some other scholars. In order to broaden the basis of this chapter, I informally surveyed others who teach this subject. I contacted a number of teachers and scholars of elegy directly and sought additional information through postings on the following electronic lists: Classics List, Latinteach, AP Latin List, Latin Best Practices. The following people responded to my survey and some sent course syllabi and other materials as well: Lowell Bowditch, Barbara Boyd, Elaine Fantham, Roy Gibson, John Gruber-Miller, Judith Hallett, Stephen Harrison, John Henderson, Keely Lake, Nora MacDonald, Allen Miller, Maria Wyke. I am very grateful for the time they took to share their thoughts with me. The fact that they responded to the survey in no way suggests that they necessarily agree with what I write here. It merely confirms their interest in the topic and their generosity. None of us teaches in a vacuum (at least I hope we do not), and it is most welcome to have professional colleagues contribute to our common teaching ideas and practices. I thank, too, volume editor Barbara Gold for her editing suggestions and Judith Hallett and Matthew Santirocco for permission to share personal correspondence.

Let me start with a question that arose in my own Latin elegy class in 2006 at Hunter College, New York, for I think the answers from a slightly edited email correspondence about that question are revealing about what elegy courses contain (or do not contain) and the academic circumstances that have shaped that.

[Ancona] Dear Judy [Hallett] – My Latin elegy class students read your 1973 article on elegy [Hallett 1973, reprinted in Peradotto and Sullivan 1984 and Miller 2002] the same day they read Sulpicia. Something I had never thought about before meeting with them and seeing their responses is the fact that you don't discuss Sulpicia at all in that piece. And I'd love to get your background on why. Did you read her at all in your Classics preparation? (I certainly didn't.) Any historical insights would be useful for me and the class. We had a good time discussing your piece.

[Hallett] You're right, I don't discuss Sulpicia. I had never read her carefully before Sarah [Pomeroy] asked me to translate some of her poems for GWWS [*Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves* (Pomeroy 1975)] soon after I wrote that piece. And John Sullivan [editor of *Arethusa*], who commissioned and parented that essay, never suggested that I include her, so it was not merely my youthful ignorance. She wasn't on the elegiac radar screen. Matthew's article [Santirocco 1979] had a good deal to do with her increased importance, and we are all in his debt. Did you ask him why/how he wrote that piece? I would be curious.

[Santirocco]

I had "discovered" Sulpicia as an undergraduate. We were reading Tibullus in an elegy class, and I was fascinated by that strange grab-bag, the *Corpus Tibullianum*. Later, as a graduate student, I discovered that very little had been written on her and much of it seemed sexist ("Ladies' Latin"). Finally, I thought that the article would be the first in a series of essays on women poets in antiquity (mostly Greek, of course). But then Horace and other topics beckoned, and I never got further with that project than the Sulpicia article in *CJ* [*Classical Journal*]. Happily Jane Snyder's book [Snyder 1989] eventually filled the gap, and since then I've been pleased to see a cottage industry in Sulpicia grow up. The latest contribution to that will be a set of papers that were delivered a couple of years ago at a CAAS [Classical Association of the Atlantic States] meeting. I'll be publishing them in *CW* [*Classical World* 100.1] this year (Santirocco 2006).

[Santirocco]

I forgot when I wrote to you one other thing that motivated me – I had read that preposterous but intriguing statement of Ezra Pound that it would be worth ten years of a person's life to translate Horace, Ovid, or perhaps Sulpicia! [based on Pound (1929–30) in *Criterion*, reprinted in *Arion* 1970, quoted in Santirocco 1979 (231)].

[Ancona] Dear Matthew – Thanks for filling me in! So good that you wrote that early (now so widely cited) piece. It was certainly the first thing I ever read on Sulpicia.

This brief exchange prompted by student questions in my elegy class in 2006 is revealing on a number of levels relevant to the topic at hand. The juxtaposition of reading the elegies of Sulpicia, Rome's female elegiac poet (her female identity is accepted by most, but not all scholars [cf. e.g., Hubbard 2004–05], who makes a case for the elegies as male-authored and written from a female perspective), with a feminist-inspired and highly influential piece of criticism on Roman elegy (Hallett 1973), which only addressed male elegiac poets, is noteworthy for the attention it calls to the recognized canon of Roman elegiac authors (who was reading which authors in the 1960s and 1970s) and how that canon limited the object of academic inquiry. Thus, despite the fact that Hallett 1973 is clearly a product of early feminist work in Classics inspired by the women's movement in the United States, Hallett herself, surprisingly only in retrospect, had not given much attention to Sulpicia until, as she notes, she was commissioned to translate her work for Pomeroy 1975, a book that helped to establish the field of women's history within Classics. In the same decade, Santirocco perceived sexism in the published criticism of Sulpicia and that, in part, spurred on his own desire to discuss her work in different terms. Thus, approaches to elegy were changing as was even the definition of who should be included in the canon of elegiac poets.

2. Touchstones

Women and Gender

Gender studies, or the “discovery of women” as one of my survey respondents wryly called it, has radically transformed the teaching of Roman elegy. Whether it is the inclusion (or lack of inclusion) of Sulpicia in course readings, or the question of the relationship between the “women” of elegy and “real” Roman women, or the examination of the gendered dynamics between male and female in the elegies, or the question of “woman” as literary construct or subject matter, issues of gender are now typically addressed in courses on Roman Love Elegy. What form this takes and the points of view taken of course will differ, but it seems inescapable that gender is now considered a central critical issue for reading and studying Roman Love Elegy.

Secondary works by Judith Hallett, Maria Wyke, and Ellen Greene are frequently mentioned by teachers as useful for addressing issues of gender and elegy with students. Hallett's influential 1973 article, mentioned above, set elegy in the context of Roman history, values, and culture and argued that the genre was “countercultural” in that it embodied reversals of expected gender roles (men were powerless and women powerful)

and valued activities (e.g., love over war) that were not typical choices for elite Roman men. The fact that elegy contained this countercultural element suggested an openness on the part of Roman society to unconventional roles and values. Wyke's work has focused attention on the elegiac mistress as the *scripta puella*, who functions as a site for discourses concerned with power, gender, and cultural and political systems (Wyke 2002 and elsewhere). Much of Greene's work addresses the ways in which elegy is neither feminist nor anti-feminist, focusing on the presence of traditional values even within the context of seemingly counter-traditional genres like elegy (Greene 1998 [2010]). Hallett's early article serves very effectively as provocation (whether one agrees with it or not), and thus it provides an effective teaching tool. Greene's work has been noted for its clarity of expression, providing an approachable secondary text for reading with students. (This is no small matter. One may have favorite scholars, but our own favorites may not always work well in the classroom, unless heavily "digested" by us first). Finally, Wyke has extended work on the mistress in significant fashion, showing the multitude of ways in which meaning can be derived from a figure in its original poetic and social/historical context and then on through its later reception. I think this multi-faceted and wide-ranging approach of Wyke's work has made it essential reading for students.

What is "Roman Elegy" or "Roman Love Elegy"?

The slippage back and forth between these two terms suggests the potential centrality of love to this genre, while acknowledging that Roman elegy perhaps need not include love. One can define the genre in purely metrical terms, focusing solely on the use of the elegiac couplet (one dactylic hexameter line followed by two and a half dactyls, i.e., a pentameter). This meter is essential, but is it enough? Where does epigram leave off and elegy begin? How many couplets do you need for a Roman elegy? If love is essential to Roman Elegy, what do we do with the elegies that are not about love? Do these exceptions somehow prove the rule, or should the topic of love be seen as somehow less central?

I raise these questions because teachers will want to define the subject of their courses or the nature of the genre in relation to their teaching. It is tempting, if one is pulling out selections to read, to choose only those that reinforce a definition of Roman Elegy as a genre that focuses on the relationship between a female beloved/mistress and the male poet-lover who has been "captured" by her. She is the *domina* (mistress, in the sense of paramour as well as in the sense of female master), and he is the "slave". Yet is this what elegy is about or all it is about? What happens when the beloved (as occurs, for example, in Tibullus' poems addressed to Marathus) is male or when there are "serial" beloveds? What happens when Rome and history intrude, as, for example in Propertius 4.1, and the so-called central feature of elegy becomes compressed and provides rather a window onto other non-elegiac concerns, while it also winds back upon and comments on itself? In Tibullus, is the erotic relationship at times merely a pretext for writing about other things? Is Propertius as interested in his world of mythological and literary allusions as he is in "love," or more so? Have things become so literarily self-conscious in Ovid that the subject is only writing about love and no longer about love itself? The centrality of the mastering love mistress is there in elegy (although not in Sulpicia, where a certain equality is wished for), but that is not all that is there. Thus, the teacher needs to define the desired

subject matter for purposes of choosing which authors, which works, and which poems to read. Is the whole range best for inclusion for the way it plays off and expands the supposed centrality of the *domina* and her “slave”? Or does this unnecessarily complicate matters for purposes of teaching? Each teacher will have his or her own response.

Why do Sulpicia and Marathus, for Example, Matter?

Sulpicia, female poet/lover, raises issues about the gender of an author and about first person female voices in elegy. Marathus, male beloved, requires our shifting focus away from the beloved as necessarily female in Roman love elegy. This is part of what makes these exceptional figures matter to teaching elegy. The generalizations one is tempted to make about this genre must be revisited when “exceptions” are included. Potentially easy conclusions about gender dynamics in elegy, whether seen in purely literary terms or in strongly historical terms, are disrupted by these figures. For teaching purposes, including Sulpicia provides an excellent opportunity for students to think about whether it matters (for our reading of the poems, for our understanding of this genre, for our historical knowledge about women in antiquity) whether the author of these poems was a woman. Likewise, inclusion of the Marathus poems opens the door for discussion of the ways in which gender does or does not intersect with a “privileged” position in the genre of love elegy or in the larger context of Roman society as a whole. What does it mean to be a man, but one in an unmarked “position”. One thinks here of the work of Catharine Edwards (1993, especially the chapter on *mollitia*), and Craig Williams (1999, second edition 2009), among others, for perspectives on the complexity of what it meant to *be* an historical “man” as well as to be *depicted* as one. Still further, as the title of Allen Miller’s 2001 article, “Why Propertius is a Woman: French Feminism and Augustan Elegy” suggests, there are male authors with feminized voices, thus destabilizing what it may mean to be a “male” or “female” elegiac poet.

Real Life or Literary World?

When we teach elegy, it is tempting to mine it for information on Roman culture, history, and society; with some careful controls in place, it is possible to access some information about Roman social life. On the other hand, some would have us read Latin love elegy as a “purely” literary genre in which there is little or no relation to an actual lived reality. Wherever we place ourselves in relation to these reading strategies, stating these extreme positions for students can be useful. Trying to reconstruct a consistent plot or reality from works in this genre ultimately leads to failure, while seeing it as divorced completely from the lives that actual women and men lived in Rome is also problematic. Of course the context in which we read elegy will drive some of the questions we ask. If we teach the poems in a history class or a class on women in antiquity, we are more likely to lean towards the former approach; if we are teaching them in a Latin literature/language class, there will likely be room for interpretations that are more purely literary. Ideally, though, each of these “extreme” positions will be used to highlight its own inadequacies. The history class will hear of the ways in which “representation” makes problematic our use of elegy for historical

research, while the Latin literature/language class will make sure that its students have a good historical, cultural background for reading and interpreting the Latin text. Because it is an interdisciplinary field, Classics makes possible the reading of this genre in different contexts, with different purposes, and from different perspectives. One cannot read with full comprehension about the trope of love as slavery without having some knowledge of Roman slavery, while reading about the lover as slave cannot be fully comprehended without acknowledging that this is a trope, not a reality. Lyne 1980a and Griffin 1985 are useful exemplars for “reality-based” readings, while Veyne (1988a) can be useful for exploring the other end of the spectrum. Kennedy 1993a does an excellent job of undermining and problematizing the whole dichotomy “real life or literary world” with which I titled this section. It makes reading Roman love elegy “difficult” in an exciting way. A small dose will do wonders for unsettling student (and teacher) assumptions.

Where are Augustus and Politics?

Roman elegy is a genre that is in part shaped by Roman political, social, and economic conditions and discourse in the Augustan period, that is, the period in which Octavian, later Augustus, was coming to sole power, achieved it, and then ruled Rome (first century BCE–first century CE). And literature, as a part of those conditions and that discourse, in turn has a shaping effect. To see the genre in some monolithic way as embracing or opposing established Roman power under Augustus is not a useful approach. Rather the politics of the day are best seen as grounding and/or provoking a variety of responses from each of the elegists in particular poems over time. In teaching Roman elegy some basic background on the Augustan period should certainly be provided. This can take the form of basic historical information, like a timeline of major events during the lifetimes of the elegists, as well as more detailed accounts of Augustus’ interaction with literary figures in this period. Such matters might include, for example, Ovid’s exile under Augustus and Augustus’ moral legislation, which affected the state’s involvement in issues like marriage, childbearing, and adultery.

The Trope of Slavery

Teaching Roman elegy provides an excellent opportunity to teach students about tropes. Anyone who has taught Medea’s speech on marriage from Euripides’ play *Medea* (214 ff.) knows how easily students can misread a trope for a reality. Medea’s marvelous rhetoric in that speech (or Euripides’ rhetoric, I should say) rouses us as readers to see Greek wives (and/or non-Greek? [Medea is not Greek, but her audience is]) as “slaves” to their husbands, but of course Greek marriage and Greek slavery, while sharing some commonalities of unequal power, were obviously not equivalents. My addition of quotation marks for “slaves” indicates the difference between this equivalence as a trope and its equivalence as fact. I doubt that I am the only teacher, though, who has had to explain to students, whether in a Greek course or a course on women in antiquity, that Greek citizen wives were not slaves and that such a notion ignores important social and legal distinctions that would have been immediately recognized, for example, in Athenian society.

While the idea of being a slave to love might seem to some students or teachers universal or cross-cultural, this trope in Roman elegy must be located in a specific Roman cultural context that included real slavery and that regarded women as less powerful in a variety of political, social, and economic ways. In a broad literary-historical context the trope can be seen as significant literarily, socially, politically. Catullus' *excrucior* (85.2), "I am tortured," joins the pain of love with the *crux* or cross used for the real, historical, torturous death of certain non-citizen criminals, thus linking (literary) erotic pain with the pain of actual legal punishment for those of low social status. So the elegist's use of the trope *servitium amoris* (slavery of love) to a *domina* ("mistress") is embedded in a social context in which the most basic of distinctions is between being free and being a slave. Free people "play" with slavery; slaves do not.

The Trope of Soldiering

Similarly, the trope of the lover as soldier in Roman elegy, most famously seen in Ovid *Amores* 1.9, *Militat omnis amans* ("Every lover soldiers..."), of course should lead to discussion of love as "battle" with all the attendant imagery that is commonplace in the Latin language and in Latin love poetry in particular: e.g., breaking down the barriers/door to the beloved. Yet students should be encouraged, as with the trope of love as slavery, to examine the trope in its larger social and political context. If a lover "soldiers," lovers can be seen as "opposed" to soldiers, partaking in good "trope fashion" only in their own activities, while mapping out a distinct and contrary sphere, or they can be seen as "aligned" with soldiers, thus potentially eroticizing the military or militarizing the lover. Does this trope situate the *otium* ("leisure" of love) at a distance from the morally- and socially-sanctioned activities of the Roman soldier or general at war? Or does it position love as (just) another upper-class Roman male activity that fits in well with the expected *cursus honorum* ("ladder of offices/honors") to be climbed in a respectable upper-class male life?

The Trope of Poverty

In addition to the tropes of slavery and of soldiering, elegy contains the trope of poverty, that is, of the "poor" lover whose beloved demands rich gifts. If the actual privileged social and economic status of the elegiac poets is to be seen as informing at all the first person singular voice of the poet-lover, then this position of impoverishment is something of a pose on the part of the poet-lover, intended to suggest that he offers "simply" love and that love should be enough. Yet the beloved is implicated in the material benefits of and products of imperialist conquest through her desire for expensive gifts. Thus the elegiac poems themselves showcase the very riches that the poet-lover tries to reject (See Bowditch 2006 for discussion of this issue).

Which Elegiac Poets and Works to Read?

As mentioned above in "What is Roman Elegy?," defining the genre of (love) elegy is a complicated task and one that is often bypassed by teachers in the interests of just getting

to the texts and reading them. However, each teacher will choose or will have chosen for him or her in institutional courses of study what to read with students. For most teachers, reading elegy means reading Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid. For some, it means reading Sulpicia as well. Others prefer to start with Catullus, who wrote several poems that fit elegiac conventions (Miller 2002 includes eight poems of Catullus for study in this anthology and reader of Latin erotic elegy). Then there is the rather mysterious figure of Lygdamus, preserved in the Tibullan corpus. Finally, we have very little of Gallus extant, unfortunately, but the ten lines we do have and their inclusion of the word *domina* (“mistress”), so important to elegy, confirm Ovid’s designation of Gallus as the creator of the genre (*Tr.* 4.10.53) (See the chapter in this volume by Gibson.) For Propertius and Tibullus, we have four books and two books of elegies, respectively. All of Ovid’s extant writings, except the *Metamorphoses*, are written in elegiac couplets, but they range beyond what is typically thought of as Latin love elegy. His three books of *Amores* (“The Loves”), specifically, continue the tradition of love elegy found in Gallus, Propertius, and Tibullus. Of Sulpicia we have six elegies, or possibly some additional ones, depending on which poems one attributes to her. Those teachers who do not want to limit themselves to the more specific genre of love elegy per se (for Ovid this would be just the *Amores*) may find it useful to include some of Ovid’s other elegiac poems in their courses, especially the *Ars Amatoria* (“Art of Love”), the *Remedia Amoris* (“Remedies for Love”), and the *Heroides* (“Heroines”).

Which Authors are Read and Why?

Here are the stereotypes. Propertius is hard (so much learned allusion, so much elaborate mythology, style not easy). This becomes both a reason to avoid reading Propertius and a reason to read him. (Those looking for an “easier” peek at the genre will likely move directly to Ovid). For those who want to really engage with the genre, Propertius will be read despite these features or, more often, because of them. The thought is that when you “conquer” reading Propertius, you’ll understand the genre and you’ll become learned too. His perceived difficulty (whether accurate or not) becomes part of his appeal. Tibullus, on the other hand, is considered difficult, not for his Latin – he was praised in antiquity by Quintilian for being elegant (*elegans*, *I. O.* 10.1.93) and by Ovid for being polished (*cultus*, *Am.* 1.15.28, 3.9.66) – but for the difficulty of “understanding” him. His frequent associative rather than linear progressions of thought, the dream-like quality of his text, its anaphoric nature, and the less “fleshed out” beloveds (Delia and Nemesis), compared to Propertius’ Cynthia, or Ovid’s Corinna, make Tibullus less approachable to many. In addition, while the Marathus poems add another dimension because they provide a male rather than a female beloved, the result for some teachers, I think, is a love poetry that becomes even more diffuse. While Tibullus is typically included in any course that attempts to “cover” Roman elegy, I would say that teachers are generally more reluctant to teach him than either Propertius or Ovid, or are more in need of guidance when they do. Recent scholarship on Tibullus that addresses some of these features as interesting rather than negative may prove especially useful to teachers (Miller 1999 and Fineberg 1999). Ovid is seen as easier than Propertius and typically as more engaging than Tibullus for use in the classroom. Ovid’s neat, clean, heavily rhe-

torical style and his playful self-consciousness about his role in the history of the genre make him very appealing to many. There are, however, those who find him facile and his wit not to their liking. The vividness of his style – take *Am.* 1.5 for example – is hard to match. Selections from both Ovid’s *Amores* and his hexameter *Metamorphoses* were read by many Latin students at the secondary school level primarily in the United States, but also internationally, as part of the College Board’s Advanced Placement “Latin Literature” course syllabus from 1994 through 2009, after which this syllabus was unfortunately discontinued. The “Latin Literature” course and accompanying Advanced Placement Exam consisted of a required Catullus component with an additional component of Cicero, Horace, or Ovid. The Ovid option was quite popular. Students typically would have spent half the academic year studying Catullus and the other half, Ovid. (See Boyd’s chapter in this volume for further information on Ovid in the former Advanced Placement curriculum, and Ancona and Hallett 2007 for discussion of the Catullus portion.)

3. My Personal Teaching Experience

I last taught Roman Elegy in Fall 2006 to a mixed group of upper-level undergraduates and M.A. students preparing to teach Latin at the secondary level. We used Miller’s *Latin Erotic Elegy* for both our Latin text and our source for secondary readings. Volumes of this kind with primary texts and selected critical readings are not uncommon, for example, in courses in English literature, but are rather rare in Classics. They offer carefully chosen secondary readings that typically form a coherent whole and show a wide range of approaches. Some instructors may prefer to focus only on the Latin text with their classes, filling in with additional background and material of their own. In my experience, though, that was a more common approach a generation or so ago. It seems more typical now for instructors to have their students do some secondary reading in their upper-level Latin classes. This reading may be done for a research paper or for an oral report. Often, though, it is built into the regular requirements for class, with students all reading a particular article for a given day and discussing it. While some instructors may feel that such secondary reading takes valuable time away from having students spend more time on the Latin itself and on increasing their reading skills, many, I think, would agree that secondary reading, with its focus on specific issues of critical interest and its use of Latin examples to support particular arguments, can in fact strengthen Latin skills along with developing a sense of the critical issues involved in a given topic or genre. In Latin courses at the upper undergraduate level I state as one of my objectives the development of such a critical approach. While at times I prefer to choose my own secondary readings, it can be useful to have them gathered together in one volume. Internet access to classical scholarship is rapidly increasing, but certainly not all readings one might want to use are available yet in that form.

Miller’s anthology includes the following secondary readings: Georg Luck, “Introduction” to *The Latin Love Elegy* (Luck 1959b); J. P. Sullivan, “The Politics of Elegy” (Sullivan 1972); Judith P. Hallett, “The Role of Women in Roman Elegy: Counter-Cultural Feminism” (Hallett 1973); R.O.A.M Lyne, “The Life of Love” (Lyne 1980b); Paul Veyne “The Pastoral in City Clothes” (Veyne 1988b); Maria Wyke, “Mistress and Metaphor in Augustan Elegy” (Wyke 1989); Duncan Kennedy, “Representation and the

Rhetoric of Reality” (Kennedy 1993b); Barbara K. Gold, “‘But Ariadne Was Never There in the First Place’: Finding the Female in Roman Poetry” (Gold 1993); David Fredrick, “Reading Broken Skin: Violence in Roman Elegy” (Fredrick 1997).

I had my students read all the critical selections along with Miller’s introduction. For several years now I have been having students write one-page answers as homework assignments on all secondary reading assigned (I use a similar writing assignment for regular Latin readings as well at times). I find these writing assignments ensure that the reading is done, help students to articulate the arguments they are reading without leaping to agreement or disagreement, and develop critical writing skills necessary for advanced work in Classics as well as for demonstrating an adequate grasp of material in one’s chosen undergraduate major. The following are typical of the homework questions I ask: Based on your reading of Miller’s introduction, what are the key features of Roman Elegy? Compare Georg Luck’s Introduction to *The Latin Love Elegy* with J.P. Sullivan’s “The Politics of Elegy.” What similar concerns do they have? How do their approaches differ? Does Sulpicia have a distinctly feminine voice? Support your argument from the text (I added this question in part because the Miller volume did not include an essay specifically on Sulpicia). What does Hallett argue is counter-cultural and feminist about Roman Elegy? (It was the juxtaposition of the previous two questions that led to the email exchange about Sulpicia with which I began this chapter). What is Lyne’s “Life of Love”? Discuss how Veyne’s article can be seen as a “response” to the arguments of Sullivan and Hallett. How does Wyke problematize “women” in Roman Elegy? Discuss some of the ways in which Kennedy problematizes the terms “representation” and “reality.” What does Gold mean by “finding the female”? What is the significance of elegy’s “broken flesh” for Fredrick?

There are many textbooks available for reading the Latin of the elegists. What instructors will likely want to keep in mind as they choose books to order for their students is the kind and level of annotation provided, if any. Some instructors may have students read from an unannotated text, like the Oxford Classical Texts, but I think more instructors likely choose books that provide notes of a grammatical, historical, and literary nature. Miller’s anthology is close to 500 pages, including the secondary readings. It provides less grammatical support than some students will need but is excellent on literary and historical matters. My own students could have used a somewhat higher level of annotation for grammatical matters. If I were to use Miller’s book again, I would likely supplement it with one or more shorter one-author texts containing more extensive annotation. The textbooks available with more extensive annotation will likely cover much less material, typically just one author, for example, in the case of Tibullus, or just selected books from Propertius or Ovid.

4. Some New Things to Try

This final section will address a few new things to consider doing while teaching Roman elegy, based on changing features of the teaching of Latin and on comments from the respondents to my survey. Recent developments in Latin pedagogy have placed new emphasis on active use and production of Latin, on acquisition of aural/oral Latin

skills, and on newer forms of Latin composition (such as writing in Latin instead of or in addition to translating from English into Latin). While most would still see the reading of (and ultimately the analysis of and interpretation of) authentic Latin texts as the primary goal of Latin instruction, the use of oral, aural, and written Latin in the curriculum is seen by some now as an end in itself and by many as potentially contributing in a useful way to the (primary) goal of reading. See, for example, the interest in speaking Latin in the classroom as evidenced by a session by Bob Patrick on the communicative approach to teaching Latin at the 2010 Summer School of the Association for Latin Teaching in the United Kingdom. While “standards” for teaching and curriculum are more commonly developed for instruction at the pre-collegiate level, they can offer educators at higher levels of instruction useful ideas as well. See, for example, *Standards for Latin Teacher Preparation* (Little, Percy et al. 2010) and *Standards for Classical Language Learning* (Gasgoyne et al. 1997), developed in North America. Indeed, assessment has become an important part of college-level curricular discussions now, and of course assessment, in turn, requires examination of objectives and standards. In addition, standards at lower levels of instruction may be shaping the Latin experience of the students we later teach at the higher levels. Finally, professional discussion of goals and practices across levels can be useful for building student learning from one level to the next.

My own institution, Hunter College, in New York City, just instituted a required “Speaking and Writing Latin” course for our M.A. students who are being trained to teach at the secondary school level. The October 2010 Placement Service listing of the American Philological Association-Archaeological Institute of America includes a notice for a college-level job at University of Massachusetts at Boston, requiring the following:

“He/she will have documentable interest and experience in such active methodologies for the teaching of Latin as oral Latin and Latin-Latin prose composition. Ideally, he/she will be able to develop and teach a Latin conversation class.”

Such developments indicate that there is a certain effect at the college level of evolving standards for Latin instruction that incorporate active use of Latin and oral-aural and written Latin. Thus, I would like to include here some ways in which Roman Elegy might be tied in a general way to some of these newer emphases in Latin learning and instruction, emphases that deserve our attention as teachers at any level.

One exercise I was required to do as a student in a Latin Composition class at the University of Washington, Seattle, many years ago (long before the recent interest in more active Latin instruction) was to write a few Latin lines in, I believe, dactylic hexameter. While the details are somewhat hazy from this distance in time, I recall the exercise giving me a more concrete sense of how Latin meter operates – both its flexibility and its constraints. I believe we were given some required words to use so that the major task was arranging them in a way that would work metrically, much like solving a puzzle. I still remember the challenge of incorporating the words into the appropriate patterns. An exercise in which Latin elegy students would create (along the lines of what was required of me) elegiac couplets rather than just learn to scan them metrically would give a more intimate sense of how the meter works, its metrical patterns, and words it does

and does not allow for inclusion, and so forth. Such an exercise could be expanded to require the composition of an entire Roman elegy. Choice of vocabulary and elegiac *topoi*, in addition to the metrical challenges mentioned above, could lead to a heightened sense for students of the nature of the genre. I owe this suggestion for including elegy composition to Roy Gibson, University of Manchester, U.K., whose inclusion of a “forged” Gallus he wrote for his own chapter in this volume led to an email exchange with me about the possible value of such a composition exercise. While such a project could be set up as an individual one, it could also be accomplished as a group activity. Judith Hallett, University of Maryland, already leads students through such a group verse composition exercise and encourages them to attempt such Latin writing on their own as well. I would add that the easy availability of wikis makes collaborative student work possible, even for busy students who may not have time for much out-of-class face-to-face contact with other students.

Newer technology makes it much easier to expand the development of and reinforcement of oral-aural Latin skills through reading aloud and listening to Latin poetry. While classroom listening and imitating/speaking is still vital, tools like Wimba Voice Tools one can use in Blackboard allow for easy production of, recording of, and storing of spoken Latin by students and teachers alike. Teachers have been requiring students to memorize chunks of Latin for a long time, and I am a strong advocate of this practice myself. The chunk memorized remains as a repository of authentic Latin to be mentally consulted when desired. Constructions and vocabulary that appear in those chunks tend to be remembered and understood for a long time. Memorized metrical patterns make the rhythms of poetry more familiar than writing out scansion can. Recording shifts the focus away from memory *per se* and emphasizes pronunciation, performance, and rhetoric. Being able to practice a passage for quite a while and then record it forces choices about oral interpretation. I still like to have the memorization requirement, but the added activities of repeated listening to what I have recorded, and repeated reading aloud by the student of the Latin towards the goal of an accomplished recording have much to offer.

Judith Hallett, University of Maryland, has incorporated the staging of Latin elegy as one of several possible options for a final assignment in her combined undergraduate and M.A. level “Catullus and the Roman Elegiac Poets” course, with performances given at a final class session. Latin teachers at the secondary school level have been having students make videos of Latin skits and projects, some of which end up on YouTube, for quite a while. The benefit of some of these projects appearing online is that our students can then learn from and enjoy each other’s work and become part of a larger community of Latin learners.

Maria Wyke, University College London, reports using a lot of visual material from the Augustan Age and from the reception of love poetry for teaching elegy. The availability of the Internet makes far easier now the incorporation of visual material into the teaching of Roman Elegy. Visual material introduces an interdisciplinary element to the reading of elegiac texts, whether taken from contemporary or later sources.

Finally, an approach to teaching Roman Love Elegy found in Roy Gibson’s course syllabus I found interesting to ponder – teaching Latin students and students reading sources in English in a single elegy course with a mix of common meeting sessions and separate meeting sessions. This presents the challenge of determining which elements of the topic are appropriate for both audiences and which are more appropriate for one or the

other. In my own experience, teaching Latin literature in translation has a way of crystallizing certain overarching points about a given topic as well as determining the essential literary-historical context in which to situate a given text. It also forces me to decide which bit of Latin text to introduce to and discuss with the in-translation audience in order to show how the original language matters without undermining the value of reading in translation. Such a combined class might also serve the pragmatic purpose of keeping Latin classes alive, where their small enrollments might endanger their existence at some institutions, while expanding the study of a topic like Roman Love Elegy to a wider, non-specialist audience.

FURTHER READING

Those interested in pursuing the topic of teaching Roman Love Elegy should examine a broad range of scholarly publications on the subject of elegy, not limited to the particular works I have mentioned in this chapter in the context of teaching. There is much exciting work going on in the field, as the other chapters in this volume will show. In addition, consultation of some basic historical or literary-historical discussions of the time period would be beneficial. As many textbooks as possible should be examined to see which one(s) might work best in a given teaching situation. What our students need varies tremendously and there are no ideal textbooks, just ones that fit particular contexts better than others. Miller 2002 would be an excellent place to start for those interested in a single text that provides introduction, Latin selections, commentary, and key secondary sources. There are many other excellent textbooks available and many teachers may prefer to shape their courses with smaller textbooks and secondary readings of their own choosing (made easier through increasing access to such reading online). The journal *Classical World* publishes textbook surveys on a regular basis. This would be a good source to consult for other textbook titles to consider.

I am not aware of any published work on the topic of teaching Roman Love Elegy per se. For a narrower focus, Boyd 2007 offers a discussion of how to relate recent scholarship on Ovid to the teaching of Ovid in general (including but not limited to elegy), while Katz 2009 presents a short survey of various scholarly approaches to Ovidian elegy and relates them to the context of teaching. For more on pedagogy issues, see the chapters in this volume on “Teaching Ovid’s Love Elegy” (Boyd) and “Teaching Rape in Roman Love Elegy” (Liveley and James). For Propertius and Tibullus, textbooks themselves may provide some guidance for teaching. The notes in Putnam’s 1973 *Tibullus: A Commentary* are very useful as are those in Camps’ editions of Propertius (Book I, 1961; Book II, 1967; Book III, 1966; Book IV, 1965). For elegiac poets who form a smaller part of the curriculum (for example, Sulpicia), commentaries or relevant scholarly publications will likely be the best source of ideas for teaching. Finally, Diotima: Materials for the Study of Women and Gender in the Ancient World, <http://www.stoa.org/diotima/>, remains a marvelous resource for course syllabi, bibliography, texts, and articles. Since the topic of Roman Love Elegy is so tied to issues of women and gender, students and teachers may find much of value there.

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CHAPTER 32

Teaching Ovid's Love Elegy

Barbara Weiden Boyd

The topic of this chapter was suggested by the volume's editor. My first (though tacit) response was that this could be a very short chapter indeed, since one might demonstrate persuasively that Ovid never wrote a word of love elegy, at least not if we define it as a genre in which the (usually male) poet uses the first person to establish an intimacy with his readers, to depict himself as protagonist in a narrative about his subordination – indeed, subjugation – to a woman whose dominant role in the relationship inverts Roman social reality, and to offer a compelling picture of a soul tormented by unrequited love and tantalizing desire. Ovid is a prolific writer of what I would call anti-love elegy – on those rare occasions when he does locate himself in this subordinating narrative, he does so with a rueful self-awareness that he should have (and could have) avoided the situation confronting him; his self-conscious playfulness bears little resemblance to the poetic soul-baring we associate with Catullus, Propertius, Sulpicia, and (presumably) Gallus.

A second obstacle is the ambiguity of the phrase “teaching Ovid” – is “teaching” a gerund with Ovid its object, his name used as a metonymy for his verse, or an adjectival participle describing Ovid as teacher? The answer has important implications – after all, Ovid presents himself as a “teacher of love” (*praeceptor amoris*) throughout the *Ars amatoria* and *Remedia amoris*. Much of Ovid's elegy is explicitly didactic, furthermore, allowing the poet to assert his role as teacher; would this, then, be a more productive point of entry to the topic of this chapter?

I offer an arch opening to this discussion because our subject is himself arch, continually inviting contemplation of the contradictory nature of his work. In this spirit, I undertake the following survey of how Ovid's love elegy is taught, and offer some suggestions about how his elegy can be approached in the classroom.

1. Ovid in the Classroom: A Brief History and Description of the Status Quo

I begin with a look at current trends regarding Ovidian elegy in the classroom. I draw first on my own experience, as student and teacher of Latin literature. Secondly, I turn to my work from 1989 to 1997 with the Advanced Placement Latin Examination Development Committee, the entity that, on behalf of the College Board, sets the syllabus and standards for the Advanced Placement Latin curriculum used in secondary schools nationwide, and develops the annual examinations on the basis of which many colleges and universities award advanced standing, or college credit, or both, to entering students who have performed well. Third, I offer a few observations on the results of a survey I conducted under the aegis of the Modern Language Association in 2004–2005 in preparation for editing a volume on Ovid and the Ovidian tradition for the series *Approaches to Teaching World Literature* (Boyd and Fox 2010a). The value of each of these experiences lies in part in the fact that each allows a perspective developed over a number of years; taken together, these perspectives can offer a comprehensive historiography both of Ovid's elegiac presence in modern classrooms and of changing approaches to that presence over roughly four decades.

Ovid's role (absent presence might be more appropriate) in my own training as a classicist was limited, but memorable; the occasions on which he received notice from teachers and classmates alike all left their mark. I read *Amores* 1.9, with its opening words "every lover is a soldier" (*militat omnis amans*), as an undergraduate in the 1970s in a course on Latin love poetry, and was struck by both its wit and its equation of love and war (noteworthy indeed to a child of the 60s). But Ovid's absence from the canon of "best" and "most important" Latin poets did not mean much to me until I was in graduate school; during that time I encountered Ovid only twice in a classroom, and once on a reading exam; each of these encounters is instructive about the perception and status of Ovid's poetry in recent American classical education. First, there was a sight reading exam, in which we brand-new graduate students were asked to translate two selections of prose and two selections of poetry which – our faculty confidently assumed – we were not likely to have encountered previously in our reading. One of these was a passage from *Heroides* 7, the letter from Dido to Aeneas. And the faculty was right – none of us knew that such a letter by Dido even existed. My first graduate classroom experience with Ovid was in a Latin reading course, in which first-year graduate students read selections from a wide variety of authors, primarily in order to acquire speed in reading. We read selections from the *Metamorphoses* under the guidance of a Latinist who had himself written a dissertation on Ovid; but our sampling was terminated when one of my classmates complained about the disturbing violence of the Apollo and Daphne episode. Several years later, I took a seminar on Roman elegy conducted by an instructor who had recently completed a dissertation on Callimachean poetics in Propertius; the course syllabus allotted about a week to early elegy, three weeks to Tibullus, and the rest of the term to Propertius; the final meeting of the semester was devoted to a survey of Ovid's *Amores*, seen as the last gasp of a short-lived tradition. Thus, if my educational experience in the 1970s says anything about Ovid in American classical education, it is that he was marginalized, considered

not particularly good (or too disturbing for his own good), and not central to the education of a future scholar and teacher of Latin literature.

Major changes were on the horizon, however: the appearance in 1986–87 of two important new analyses of Ovidian poetics (Knox 1986 and Hinds 1987) heralded a new era of serious attention devoted to Ovid. While the focus of each of these books was on the *Metamorphoses*, each had far-reaching implications for our understanding of the Ovidian corpus as a whole; Knox's book in particular proposed a reading of the *Metamorphoses* as a poem strongly influenced by the elegiac tradition. Over the next decade or so, many new studies of Ovid's poetry appeared (see this book's bibliography), including several monographs on the elegiac Ovid (Myerowitz 1985; Sharrock 1994; Boyd 1997a); increasing scholarly interest in Ovid resulted in his introduction to the college classroom, and that reception in turn resulted in a demand for editions and commentaries that would make his poetry accessible to a new generation of students. During this period, I was involved with the College Board's Advanced Placement Latin Examination Development Committee, which was eager to make changes in the AP Latin syllabus that would bring advanced high-school Latin in line with college offerings and might even expand the AP Latin program in high schools. At the time, there were two different AP Latin curricula: one based on selections from Vergil's *Aeneid*, and the other on selections from Horace's *Odes* and Catullus. The latter of these examinations served a very small audience that showed no signs of potential growth – fewer and fewer high school teachers had either the interest or the expertise in Horace to make the course succeed, and its ability to sustain itself as a second examination was questionable, at least from an economic point of view (details and statistics in Boyd 2007, 46–47, n.13).

When a nationally administered test is involved, the process of change is intentionally slow, with results felt only after a variety of surveys and discussions with different interest groups have been completed and assessed. In this case, the committee surveyed high school and college Latin instructors across the country, looking at current practice and developing trends; it quickly became apparent that the AP audience would welcome Ovid. After several years of planning, a new exam, Latin Literature, was introduced (first administered in 1999): selections from Ovid's *Amores* and *Metamorphoses* were included among several optional authors and texts, and were paired with selections from Catullus. The committee's decision to include selections from the *Metamorphoses* was straightforward, since the appeal of episodes like that of Pyramus and Thisbe to teenaged Latin students is obvious; the *Amores*, however, presented an unusual and even daring choice, since these elegies were generally considered less accessible to readers without a confident grasp of Latin poetic history and traditions. Indeed, most of the Latin teachers polled in the test development process had little familiarity with the *Amores*; but the committee, which included several Ovid scholars, saw this as an exceptional opportunity to expand teachers' horizons and to encourage both new and experienced Latin teachers to think about ways to develop thematic, stylistic, and cultural connections between Catullus and Ovid by emphasizing the intertwining of love and love poetry in the Latin literary tradition.

The success of that innovation cannot be overstated. Teachers daunted by Horace quickly discovered the appeal of Ovid; students were won over by Ovid's engaging style. The population of AP Latin test-takers almost tripled in a 15-year period, and their reading of Ovid has made the college Latin classroom a more exciting place to be ever since.

While Ovid's addition to the AP Latin curriculum is not the only change that that program experienced in the 1990s, and while Latin's growth on the high school level, at least as measurable by the number and performance of AP Latin test-takers, is not attributable to Ovid's presence alone, there is no question that Ovid's poetry – including a small but significant sample of his love elegy – contributed to a reinvigoration of the teaching of Ovid at every level. This reinvigoration has embraced the discussion of gender role-reversal in Latin love poetry, poetic persona vs. literary autobiography, genre, and intertextuality, and so has given Latin students an array of critical skills that build on the solid grammatical and syntactical training they receive in their elementary Latin education.

Ovid's modern career thus parallels to a remarkable degree the changes that have shaped classics as a discipline over the last three decades or so. Coincidentally, the College Board decided in mid-2008 to terminate the Latin Literature exam; financial and other considerations rationalized according to a business model do not leave much room for the distinctiveness of teaching and learning Latin in the contemporary educational setting. The Latin Literature exam was administered for the last time in May 2010, leaving only a separate exam on Vergil's *Aeneid*; this exam in turn is to be replaced by a new curriculum combining selections of the *Aeneid* with selections from Caesar's *Gallie War*, tentatively scheduled to be introduced in 2012–13. Even in his absence, however, Ovid's impact is likely to endure.

I turn finally to acknowledge another important context that impinges upon Latin education, although I cannot do it justice here: on the college and university level, Ovid's poetry has a polymorphous vitality that transcends the Latin classroom. I have just completed a six-year project conducted under the auspices of the Modern Language Association, developing and editing (with Cora Fox) a volume of essays that support the teaching of Ovid's poetry in a wide variety of contexts and classrooms, aimed at both classicists and specialists in other literatures. While the *Metamorphoses* (read in translation) accounts for much extra-classical interest in Ovid, the amatory elegiac works (especially the *Amores*, but the *Ars amatoria* and *Heroides* as well) have found new life in many other settings. These include courses on the English renaissance, where Marlowe's *Ovid's Elegies* is a central text in discussions of gender and the literary career in the political and cultural discourses of the period (Cheney 2010), and courses on medieval and early humanist poetry, where Ovid's amatory didactic is as fundamental to understanding the tradition of courtly love as it was basic to the education of those whose works were a product of that tradition (Hexter 1986; Stapleton 1997). As classicists recognize the potential of reception studies for the future of our discipline, Ovid's poetry, including his amatory elegy, is likely to play a central role in how and what we teach, and so to perpetuate the current *actas Ovidiana* (the phrase is from Traube 1910, 113, describing the literary influence exerted by Ovid in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries CE).

2. Ovid in the Classroom: Themes and Models

The MLA project I have described reveals the adaptability of Ovid's poetry to a wide range of courses and of levels of literary sophistication among our students. In the remainder of this essay, I focus on three categories of analysis that lend themselves particularly well to the teaching and study of Ovid's love elegy; it should become evident to

readers that, while describing several thematic constellations that are particularly relevant to this body of work, I am also proposing the sort of “boundary violation” that Ovid’s poetry so frequently invites. These suggestions reflect my own teaching practice as well as that of several colleagues, including participants in the MLA project and fellow classicists. These are intended, however, only as provocations: readers are encouraged to innovate and juxtapose as best suits their institutions, students, and tastes, since polymorphous Ovid lends himself to a vast array of approaches.

Gender

The semblance of reality constructed by love elegy lends itself well to the analysis of gender roles in Roman culture, and its (at least ostensibly) subversive political stance is in turn well illuminated through the application of theories of gender difference (Greene 1998; S. James 2003). The elegiac *domina* and her subordinated, enslaved lover together offer a mirror image of the hierarchy of gender relationships in Roman society; this conscious destabilization of social norms in the controlled environment of elegy may be seen both to undermine the status quo in a time of political uncertainty and to sustain the imbalance of gendered power in an era of challenged but essentially conservative *mores*. The traditional class stratification of Roman society, combined with Augustus’ promotion of what we might call a “government takeover” of family values (see below), provided an easy if delicate target for poets eager to position themselves and their poetry as alternatives to epic empire-building; yet these alternatives themselves can also be read as confirmation of the Augustan cultural shift. Whether we read for the Augustan subtext or prefer to emphasize the subversiveness of Ovid’s amatory play, his erotic elegy offers a rich exploration of the discourses of gender in Augustan poetry (compare, e.g., Labate 1984; Milnor 2005; Casali 2006).

Several essays elsewhere in this volume look closely at gender imbalance in elegy, especially in its most extreme enactment, rape (Keith; Greene; Liveley and James). To supplement them I offer a few suggestions for how this issue can be explored in Ovid’s amatory elegy, following two basic principles: 1) Ovidian gender dynamics can often be illuminated through comparison of motifs or relationships across poetry collections, in this case, *Amores*, *Ars*, and *Heroides*; and 2) the stance assumed by Ovid from the opening of the *Amores* as *in primis* a poet whose decision to write erotic elegy is no decision at all but rather something foisted upon him by Cupid (*Amores* 1.1) establishes a distance or detachment from his subject that never entirely disappears from his poetry, even when he is most abject, and that lends positive support to his role as *praeceptor* in the *Ars* and as sympathetic “ventriloquist” in the *Heroides*.

I begin with the *amator* Ovid of the *Amores*. Unlike Propertius, Ovid never depicts himself as entirely in thrall to Corinna; her power over him is repeatedly seen to be secondary, and consequent, to the power of Cupid. Thus, after grudgingly submitting to Cupid in the first elegy, Ovid yields to the power of *amor* in the second: “Look, I confess! I am your latest spoils of war, Cupid” (1.2.19). Remarkably, however, there is as yet no explicit “object” for the desire Ovid feels in this poem (1.2.1–8); an appropriate *puella*, as yet unnamed, appears on the scene only in the following poem (1.3.1), and her name does not emerge until even later, at *Am.* 1.5.9: “Behold: Corinna

arrives.” This remarkable postponement not only creates a sort of novelistic suspense, but also invites us, witnessing the erotic trauma inflicted by Cupid on the poet, to identify and sympathize with his masculine sensibility and frame of reference. The prominence of Cupid in the depiction of Ovid’s ongoing subjugation to love establishes a pattern of triangulation familiar from mythical narratives, in which a divinity, seeking vengeance on character A, works through character B to achieve it: compare Aphrodite’s use of Phaedra to punish Hippolytus, or Poseidon’s use of Pasiphaë to punish Minos (Gantz 1993, vol. 1 offers details and variants). Even closer is the story Ovid himself narrates in *Metamorphoses* Book 1 concerning Apollo and Daphne: Cupid uses Daphne to avenge the challenge offered him by Apollo, who boasts that he is the more powerful of the two and thus provokes his younger sibling to shoot him and cause him to desire the first woman he sees (*Met.* 1.459–567; Knox 1986, 14–18 discusses the elegiac character of Apollo’s love and its relationship to *Am.* 1.1). Ovid’s Corinna can thus be seen to play a literally instrumental role in the drama of the *Amores*, which itself can be figured as a power-struggle between Ovid and Cupid. The implications of this pattern for the balance of gender roles in the *Amores* is indirect but telling: Corinna seems, at least sometimes, to be less a “person” (however fictional) in the *Amores* than a means to Ovid’s humiliation, since Cupid holds more power over Ovid than he does over himself.

The question of power, direct and indirect, comes to the fore in *Am.* 1.7, where Ovid confesses to physical abuse of his *puella* (again unnamed). Ovid has struck her, causing her neatly-arranged hair to fall in disarray, and has scratched her cheeks (1.7.11, 49–50); the only explanation he offers for his behavior is *furor* (1.7.2–3). In its description of what happened the poem ranges widely from one hyperbole to another: Ovid is like an epic hero (7–18, 31–34), driven to violence by divine madness or battle-rage, or another equally heroic motive, as exemplified by characters familiar from epic and tragedy (Ajax the greater; Orestes; Milanion; Ajax the lesser). Female heroines themselves, alleges Ovid, have been known to disregard their coiffures when engaged in something important, like boar-hunting (Atalanta, 13–14), or after having been abandoned (Ariadne, 15–16) or raped (Cassandra, 17–18); and Diomedes actually struck a goddess – the implication being, of course, that Ovid’s *puella* thus has earned the distinction of being seen by her lover as a second Venus: “He was the first to strike a goddess – I, the second” (1.7.32).

Ovid’s virtuoso catalogue of transgressive behavior by heroes is balanced by a delicate lingering over the *puella*’s stunned response to her abuser: the inherent violence of his act – simultaneously acknowledged and excused by Ovid’s parade of heroic role models – is complemented by a series of similes that detail lovingly her traumatized response (Boyd 1997a, 124–29; cf. also James’ and Liveley’s articles in this volume). The paleness of her complexion and her stillness, yielding to a subtle shudder that in turn gives way to tears, are objectified as beautiful physical features even as they signify Ovid’s abusive power – he can profoundly transform his *puella*’s appearance with a single blow. The closing of the poem – in which Ovid pleads with his *puella* to restore her hair to its neat arrangement (68), so that this episode can come to a close – summarizes this relationship’s dynamics in a manner that confirms the fundamentally cyclical nature of the (im)balance of power depicted in the *Amores*: the *puella*’s likely response, compliance, constitutes Ovid’s admission that the cycle of behaviors just depicted could easily begin again.

Corinna's power, such as it is, to be used by Cupid to humiliate Ovid, comes to the fore elsewhere in the *Amores*. I note, for example, *Am.* 2.17, in which Ovid offers a traditional elegiac lament for his condition of the "slavery of love" (*servitium amoris*). In this elegy's acknowledgement of his subordination, Ovid even extends to Corinna the public and powerful authority of a judge: "light of my life, take me on whatever terms you wish; fittingly might you pronounce legislation in the middle of the forum" (23–24), thus imagining her in an all but exclusively masculine role (McKeown 1998, ad loc.). A second relevant elegy is *Am.* 3.7, in which Ovid experiences impotence when attempting to make love with Corinna, whose sexual aggressiveness is in stark contrast to his inertia (3–16). Ovid is ashamed before Corinna, whose ability to tease and mock him makes him flinch; but his primary concern is less with her – she can clearly manage without him – than with what his impotence says about his masculinity and the control that comes with it (Sharrock 1995).

Control is a central theme of Ovid's didactic love elegy: from the initial elaboration of locations suited for erotic "selection" to the elaborate instructions regarding dress, comportment, and sexual satisfaction, Ovid's *Ars* presents a poet in total control of his subject, an exceptional teacher whose poetic gifts come not from Apollo or the Muses but from his own experience: "experience inspires this work; listen to a skilled poet: I shall sing the truth ..." (*Ars* 1.29–30). His masculine identity is an important part of this role and draws attention to the gendered identity of his audience: the great practitioners of the arts and teachers of the poetic past cited by Ovid in the opening of *Ars* 1 (Automedon, Tiphys, Chiron, 5–18) all operated in contexts of heroic masculinity, and their audiences and students were likewise male. Indeed, the heroic masculinity of both Ovid and his pupils is a central trope of the poem's first two books, in which *amor* takes on the character of a military campaign, complete with instructions not only for lying in ambush and laying siege but also for the strategic selection of favorable locations, times of the year, weapons, and other accoutrements that will insure success. The third book, (ostensibly) addressed to women, offers superficially complementary instruction, but might in fact better be understood as a reprise of the earlier books from a slightly different perspective: as Gibson has demonstrated in the introduction to his commentary on *Ars* 3, Ovid carefully defines his female audience as of non-elite character and offers a portrayal of ideal feminine comportment that is most appealing to a male audience (Gibson 2003, 25–36). The most important character in *Ars* 3, in fact, is the poet himself, who uses this book to articulate in its most explicit form a poetics of moderation in love – an oxymoron that resoundingly asserts the importance of control to Ovid as both technique and theme (Gibson 2007, 36–42, 71–114).

This oxymoron offers numerous opportunities for instructors to draw their students' attention to Ovid's play with gender. Here I consider briefly one episode that illustrates Ovid's play with gendered power and the interrelationship of his different works while bringing out the oxymoron of controlled passion. Near the close of *Ars* 1, Ovid advises his pupils to avoid fraud, deceit and lies in all areas of life but one, viz., relations with women. With them alone, deception is not only acceptable but appropriate: "deceive the deceivers: a great part of their kind is shameless. Let them fall into the traps which they themselves have set" (*Ars* 1.645–46). After this clever bit of sophistry, Ovid offers two specific examples of the types of acceptable deception he means: the shedding of crocodile tears and the cultivation of a sickly pallor (1.659–80, 723–38). In both cases,

he suggests, his pupil can adopt exceptional modes of self-presentation to make progress in seduction – exceptional, that is, for a male, since this is exactly the same self-presentation – only natural, rather than feigned – that he ascribed to his *puella* in *Am.* 1.7 (see above). There, she reacted physically and emotionally to his abuse, her tears and pallor communicating for her when she was unable to speak herself; in *Ars* 1, on the other hand, comportment previously attributed to a woman at her most vulnerable becomes an effective weapon in the arsenal of a male lover wanting to seem vulnerable to the object of his pursuit.

To bring home the fact that his advice entails a reversal of gender roles, Ovid illustrates his lesson with an *exemplum* drawn from the sphere of epic – epic insofar as it focuses on Achilles, but hardly the Achilles of Homer. Rather, Ovid details the episode involving Achilles' attempt to avoid the war by assuming the disguise of a female and hiding on the island of Scyros (*Ars* 1.681–706; see Gantz 1993, vol. 2, 580–82 for versions of this tradition). There, he successfully seduces (and then abandons) Deidamia, daughter of the island's king – a success that illustrates not only the “natural” heroic masculinity of Achilles (691–92) but also the effectiveness of his deception. While illuminating Ovid's instructions to manipulate gendered stereotypes, this *exemplum* also manages to undermine – again – the indulgent self-reproach of the abject lover in *Am.* 1.7: when all is said and done, Ovid suggests, male force will prevail over female reluctance – because female reluctance is as much a part of the game as is a male's show of his “sensitive” side (“she has been conquered by force, to be sure ..., but she wanted to be conquered by force anyway,” *Ars* 1.699–700).

The *puellae* of the *Amores* and *Ars* are generally objectified; Ovid occasionally puts words into their mouths (e.g., *Am.* 3.7.77–80; *Ars* 1.701), but, just as he is the central character in the *Amores*, so are his male pupils the focus of the *Ars*. The *Heroides*, on the other hand, give the speaking role to their female “authors,” and therefore invite consideration as love elegy composed in a feminine voice; the radical change of perspective that results – sometimes described as a sort of transgendered ventriloquism – invites Ovid's readers to look at the conventions of elegy with fresh eyes (Lindheim 2003). Again, Ovid's familiarity with the discourses of gender allows him to ring new changes on familiar material, while inviting us yet again to question the limits of its subversiveness. I offer here a brief illustration of his technique, but parallels could be easily multiplied.

In *Heroides* 4, Phaedra writes to Hippolytus to confess her love and to win his; of the many clichés she uses to describe her situation, those involving her age are particularly prominent and come early in the letter (19–30). She is, after all, Hippolytus' step-mother; and while in the real families of Greek and Roman antiquity it was common – indeed typical, at least among the elite – for men to marry women much younger than themselves, Phaedra's predicament, premised on a desire to pursue an incestuous relationship with her husband's son, cannot help but make her reader wonder exactly how close she and Hippolytus are in age. She is surprisingly frank about her relative maturity, using it to provide a rationale for her exceptionally strong desire; had she known this feeling from her youth, it would be more manageable – indeed, it would be an *ars* rather than something out of control (25–26). Phaedra's use of the word *ars* to describe the mastery of love achievable by those who learn it in their youth cannot help but recall the *Ars amatoria*, where Phaedra might have read Ovid's advice to women to take advantage of their tender years, since the aging process cannot help but destroy their

desirability (*Ars* 3.57–82). She now puts in a positive light the “ripening” brought by maturity (*Her.* 4.27–30), a process whose transitory character appears in a far more negative light in *Ars* 3; Phaedra might well hope to remind Hippolytus instead of the recognition given in *Ars* 1 to the fact that, indeed, some men do like older women, and for them, there is an abundance of choice (*Ars* 1.65–66).

In modeling for Ovid’s readers the education offered to both male and female audiences by the *Ars*, Phaedra shows herself capable of writing the same sort of elegy that Ovid himself writes (Fulkerson 2005). The result is a complex play with the tension between identity and gender that complements the tension between poetic subject and object which is central to Ovid’s erotic elegy.

Cultural and Political Contexts and Consequences

The preceding discussion of how the erotic discourse of Ovid’s elegy determines – and is in turn shaped by – gender foregrounds one prominent area central to Augustus’ comprehensive social reforms. I now turn briefly to another important political concern raised, if only in retrospect, by Ovid’s amatory elegy: its alleged role in the decree of *relegatio* (exile) that forced Ovid to leave Rome in 8 CE and to spend the remainder of his life in Tomis on the Black Sea, far from family, friends, and the rewards and honors associated with a prominent literary career.

“The mystery of Ovid’s exile” (the title of a survey of the evidence by Thibault 1964) never fails to fascinate students, and its very insolubility offers rich pedagogical possibilities. Lacking any material evidence for the decree and its aftermath, we can only look to Ovid’s poetry itself for clues; and in the process, we engage in a modified version of precisely the sort of biographical criticism that for so long challenged the study of Latin love poetry generally. To what extent can the poems be considered “evidence” for Ovid’s offense? Ovid himself is tantalizingly vague: he refers only to “a poem and a mistake” (*carmen et error*, *Tr.* 2.207) in explanation. Although there is no room here to discuss and analyze all the attempts made to explain Ovid’s exile (Thibault 1964 and Goold 1983 offer some possibilities), the investigation itself is instructive: What evidence exists to demonstrate, or how might we otherwise deduce, that the *Ars* is to be identified as the *carmen* which Ovid blames for his punishment? An overview of the evidence raises further questions: does the linking of *artes* and *crimen* at *Pont.* 3.3.67–70 point directly to the *Ars* as proximate cause, or is it a more general reference to Ovid’s career as a love poet? Among many interpretive issues raised, this also invites consideration of the manuscript transmission of Ovid’s poetry, in which the modern distinction between *artes* and *Artes* was not observed.

Datable historical events and other references to the circumstances of publication in the poems send the investigation in another direction: when were Ovid’s amatory works written, and when, and under what circumstances, were they published? How did they circulate? With few historical references to go on, traditional methods for dating works of classical literature, often based on the analysis of changes in style, diction, and metrical habits, can also be instructive, but are themselves limited by the logical assumptions on which they rest. When applied to a corpus of poetry as intra-referential and intertextual as is Ovid’s, furthermore, they often result in little more than circular argument – but of

a type that can be of value to students learning the methods of classical philology and literary criticism.

Last but not least, I note the importance of introducing to students the larger Augustan context in which Ovid lived and wrote. In the previous section I singled out gender for particular attention, since the amatory relationship(s) that characterize Ovid's elegy are inseparable from the poems themselves; equally central, though less explicit, is the impact of political and cultural change on Ovid's work (see the essays by Hallett, Miller, and Bowditch in this vol.). Many scholars believe that the legislation introduced by Augustus in 18 BCE to limit marriage across different classes but encourage it between members of the same class, to reward women with multiple children while advancing their husbands' careers, and to treat adultery as an offense punishable by the state (the Julian laws, or *leges Iuliae*), is of particular importance for the amatory poetry. Some have pursued a strongly political reading of Ovid's poetry in this light and see in its results a rationale for Ovid's exile (most recently Davis 2006); others have urged instead that the ascendancy of Tiberius after the deaths of Augustus' grandsons Lucius (2 CE) and Gaius (4 CE) is a far more important factor in determining Ovid's post-*Metamorphoses* fate than is generally recognized (Knox 2004). The exploration of these and similar issues as they relate to Ovid's elegy, and vice versa, make the Ovidian classroom a rewarding space to train young Latinists in a variety of subdisciplines.

Genre and Intertextuality

Questions of genre and intertextuality are inextricably linked in Ovid's poetry. The openings of the *Amores* and *Metamorphoses* have received careful study and sophisticated discussion of each work's generic identity, and both works have been shown to engage in an intertextual conversation with a wide array of influential models, from the epics of Homer and Virgil to the aetiological elegy of Callimachus. Teaching Ovid's amatory elegy might therefore be equally well described as the teaching of intertextuality, since from the opening words of the *Amores* – “weapons in a somber rhythm” (*arma gravi numero*, 1.1.1) – Ovid spars with the shadow cast by literary tradition. Other essays in this collection (Hunter and Gibson) look particularly at Ovid's relationship to the elegiac past; here I consider briefly how this relationship can also be traced in some of the less obviously amatory works in Ovid's elegiac corpus, since these works invite our students to articulate the relationship between genre and intertextuality while exploring both their boundaries and Ovid's transgressive approach to them.

Ovid's *Remedia amoris* is an explicitly anti-erotic elegiac poem – i.e., another oxymoron. After an opening in which he promises Cupid not to abandon love, Ovid offers his readers advice that reverses the results of the preceding *Ars amatoria* and neutralizes Cupid's power; yet the advice itself is so extended, convoluted, and generally inconclusive that Fulkerson has described the result as the “failure” of the *Remedia amoris* (2004; also Conte 1989). However we may evaluate its success as erotodidaxis, the *Remedia* luxuriates in generic impurity: within the framework of erotic didactic we find an attempt to escape from elegiac love that includes experiments with almost every other type of poetry available. One example must suffice here: the episode at *Rem.* 249–90, in which Ovid uses an *exemplum* depicting the ineffectiveness of Circe's magic

to keep Ulysses in her thrall as an illustration of the superiority of his own *carmen* to hers (Brunelle 2002). In the course of this *exemplum* Ovid demonstrates the ways in which the discourses of genre and intertextuality support and extend each other's role in the amatory tradition.

The ostensible basis for comparison of the efficacy of Circe's *carmen* vis-à-vis Ovid's is unobjectionable, even trite: both use *carmina* to accomplish their goals, but Ovid's *carmen*, based on sound *ars*, is far superior to the hocus-pocus of witchcraft. A further examination of the *exemplum*, however, suggests that Ovid is playing fast and loose with his intertexts, especially with the model provided by Homer's Circe. The episode Ovid narrates – a heartsick Circe tells Ulysses of her love for him, while he flees, unmoved – is actually not Homeric at all, though the episode flirts, consciously and constantly, with its Homeric *alter ego*. Circe is no longer a witch with special powers over men, but instead resembles one of the abandoned women who populate the *Heroides*; Ulysses, unmoved, departs – and so exemplifies the successful pupil of Ovid's erotodidaxis, leaving behind his love affair with Circe as neatly and succinctly as he steps out of Ovid's poem (285). Another oxymoron – the best reader of the *Remedia*, evidently, is the reader who doesn't need any remedy for his love – allows Ovid to use elegy to subvert epic and so exemplifies the transgressive boast that Ovid will make later in the poem: "elegy confesses that it owes as much to me as lofty epic owes to Virgil" (*tantum se nobis elegi debere fatentur, / quantum Vergilio nobile debet epos*, 395–96). Ovid compares his primacy as elegist to Virgil's leading position as epic poet – but in a couplet in which elegy is the subject of the epic hexameter, and epic, of an elegiac pentameter (Morgan 2000, 112; Boyd 2009, 115–18).

Generic play and intertextual allusion take a different form in the *Tristia*. The name of this collection of elegies, written from Ovid's place of exile on the Black Sea, Tomis, immediately suggests a return to the roots of elegy in the poetry of mourning and lament (Lat. *elegia* > Gk. *elegos*, "lament"; cf. also Gk. *eleos*, "pity," "compassion"), and the subject matter, at least in summary form, is hardly erotic: Ovid addresses friends, family members, and indirectly the *princeps* himself in poems united by the common themes of exilic despair and a desperate desire to return to Rome. Yet in the midst of Ovid's outpouring of self-pity, it is possible to trace a number of striking similarities to what we generally think of as love elegy: like his predecessors Tibullus and Propertius, and like the old Ovid himself of the *Amores*, the exiled Ovid includes in this collection poems that comment self-reflexively on his poetics (e.g., 3.7, 5.12, 5.14), that imagine his death and funeral far from home and from those he loves (e.g., 3.3), or that are in fact about love—in this case, love for his wife (e.g., 1.6, 4.3, 5.5, 5.14), styled prominently as a faithful wife in the epic tradition (she is repeatedly compared to Andromache, Penelope, Laodamia, Evadne, et al.). In *Tr.* 3.3, he does all of these at once, entrusting to his beloved wife the task of seeing to his memorial after his death; he even dictates to her the text of the funerary epigram he would like her to put on his tomb, combining the conventional language of Roman epitaphs with an assertion of his poetic genius and of his undying identification with love poetry (3.3.73–76). In entrusting his funeral arrangements to his wife, Ovid brings together the themes of love and death that jointly constitute the history of elegy, and he underscores that history by enclosing within his elegy an epigram that likewise links love and death. The result is a *mise en abyme*, a miniature elegy framed by another that captures in two couplets the broad sweep of Ovid's poetic

achievement and symbolizes its durability (Ramsby 2005, 369–73; cf. Hinds 1985; Rosenmeyer 1997; Armstrong 2005, 152–61 on the relationship between the amatory and exilic elegies).

That broad sweep takes a different form in the *Fasti*, but again Ovid's abiding interest in amatory elegy is central to the poem. Ovid's aetiological poem about the Roman calendar is Callimachean in inspiration, taking its cue from the Hellenistic poet's *Aetia*: meter, content, and loose, sometimes serendipitous connections between one holiday (or constellation, or religious ritual) and the next recall nothing so much as the flashy discontinuities of Ovid's model. Yet amatory elegy is never far away, even when Ovid announces that his earlier love elegy and the current project are separated not simply by content but by professional aspiration (*Fasti* 2.5–8). The proximity of the two is most obvious when Ovid narrates an erotic story as the aetiology for a ritual or calendar commemoration (e.g., Lotis and Priapus in Book 1; Hercules, Omphale, and Faunus in Book 2), and addresses Venus herself as the patron goddess not only of the month of April but of his poetry (4.13–14). Perhaps the most daring exhibition of genre-bending poetry, however, comes at the opening of Book 3, when Ovid introduces Mars, patron of the month of March. As father of Romulus and Remus, Mars is an important presence in the calendar; and his role not only as father of Rome's founder but as model of military ascendancy for Roman youth as a whole provides rich subject matter for Ovid's poem, much of it cast in terms that recall great national epics and triumphalist historical narratives (Hinds 1992a and 1992b). But Ovid introduces Mars with a seductive invitation to give up his weapons, at least briefly, to make room for poetry – not epic poetry, but love poetry, as in the story of Mars' meeting with Silvia, whom he sees, rapes and impregnates in short order (*Fasti* 3.9–24).

Ovid's playfully daring treatment of Mars – the preeminent god of war becomes a lover – parallels his treatment of the boundaries of genre, simultaneously recognizing and blurring them. Lest we miss the point, Ovid repeats it later in the same book, when he brings Mars back into the narrative just long enough to be seen as smitten with yet another female – now, Minerva; burning with desire for the goddess, Mars turns to Anna Perenna for help (3.677–94). To add insult to injury (cf. *vulnus*, “the wound [sc. of love],” 3.682), Anna deceives the mighty god, disguising herself and entering Mars' bed dressed as Minerva. Mars has been made a laughing-stock by Anna – and by Ovid, who ends the tale with the remark that “nothing was ever more pleasing than this to Venus” (3.694). For the poet who once compared love to war (*Am.* 1.9, *militat omnis amans*), Mars in love is the perfect foil – bereft of his weapons and trapped in love elegy, as he was once trapped by Homer in the nets of Hephaestus. It is tempting to see the entire episode, in fact, as a trope for or metatextual reflection of Ovid's intertextual play with genre: after all, the poet of the *Metamorphoses* hardly restricts his transformative poetics to dactylic hexameters.

FURTHER READING

Many of the books and articles mentioned throughout this book are relevant to the teaching of elegy, and to Ovidian elegy in particular. I limit my selection here to works on the pedagogical history of Ovid's love elegy, and to current textbooks and commentaries. Since its focus is on materials

that can be used with profit in the undergraduate classroom, my list is primarily Anglophone. Curious readers should think of it as a place to start rather than as conclusive or comprehensive, and are encouraged to pursue for themselves the routes of investigation begun here.

On the premodern history of Ovid's erotic elegy in the classroom, Hexter 1986 and Stapleton 1997 introduce the medieval and renaissance educational contexts respectively; also Dimmick (2002), Burrow (2002), Fyler (2009), and H. James (2009). Cheney and Striar (2006, 31–136) provide the authoritative edition of Marlowe's translation of the *Amores*, entitled *Ovid's Elegies*; Cheney (2010) offers suggestions for how to teach this work, crucial in the tradition of early modern erotic poetry.

For the recent history of the teaching of Ovid's elegy, particularly the *Amores*, in American secondary education, see Boyd (1997b and 2007), Brucia (1998), and Boyd and Fox (2010b). Selections from the *Amores* (1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.9; 1.11; 1.12; 3.15) are available in textbooks designed for the high school/AP Latin audience by LaFleur (1999) and Jestin and Katz (2000).

Textbooks on the amatory elegy of Ovid are limited, but increasing in number, as are scholarly commentaries. The authoritative commentary on the *Amores* by McKeown (1987–98) should be in every library; Volume 4 (on Book 3) is awaited. For classroom use, Barsby on Book 1 (1973) and Booth on Book 2 (1991) are available. The Bryn Mawr series offers an inexpensive commentary on *Ars* Book 1 by Block (1989), while more advanced readers will find much of value in Hollis (1977). Gibson's commentary on *Ars* Book 3 (2003) is indispensable, but it is not for amateurs. The *Remedia amoris* is currently served by Henderson (1979), but it is out of print. For the *Heroides*, Knox (1995) and Kenney (1996) are ideal, and provide a text much improved from that available elsewhere. Fantham's 1998 commentary on *Fasti* 4 is a useful resource for those interested in the intersection between Ovid's erotic and didactic modes.

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CHAPTER 33

Teaching Rape in Roman Elegy, Part I

Genevieve Liveley

When Susan Griffin infamously designated rape an “all-American” crime (1971) she was, it seems, very wide of the mark. Britain may not share quite the same “collegiate rape culture” (Boswell and Spade 1996, 133–137) that Leo Curran identified in an essay reflecting upon his teaching of rape in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* in the 1970s (Curran 1978, 237 n.1), or the rape “pandemic” that Sharon James recognized teaching rape in Latin literature classes some thirty years later (James 2008, 11–14: see also James’ contribution in this volume). But all available evidence – statistical and personal – indicates that in UK classrooms too, many students have been raped or sexually assaulted, know young women and fellow students who have been raped, and sometimes know the young men responsible for these rapes. As we invite our students to think and rethink about their access (and lack thereof) to the reality of the women’s lives in the first century BCE, the lived experience of too many of them involves the reality of rape in the twenty-first century. This essay explores some of the pitfalls and possibilities, risks and responsibilities, involved in teaching rape in Roman love elegy in a UK university.

The most recent national statistics on rape, attempted rape and sexual assault make sobering reading alongside Roman love elegy’s “playful” representation of the same. Available data from the British Crime Survey of 2002 (BCS 2002) estimates that 190,000 incidents of serious sexual assault and 47,000 female incidents of rape or attempted rape occurred during 2001. National statistics for the United Kingdom (as for the United States) are notoriously inaccurate because rape and sexual assault are widely under-reported and under-recorded, and research findings are often inconsistent, due in part to variations in samples and research methodologies (see Regan and Kelly 2003). However, alongside their own research, suggesting that 75–95% of rapes are never reported to police, the incidence of reported rapes as recorded by HM Crown Prosecution Service

Inspectorate (HMCPS) and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) (HMCPS and HMIC 2007) has risen rapidly since 2001 (from 9,734 in 2001/02 to 13,712 in 2005/06), representing an increase of 40.9%. Research into these figures (Kelly, Lovett and Regan 2005) further indicates that increasing numbers of these rapes are being reported by young women aged between 16 and 20 – the same demographic as the students in our classes on Latin literature. Research by the World Health Organization (WHO 1991) suggests that, in the UK, one in four women have experienced rape or attempted rape. In such a context, teachers and students of Latin love elegy at UK universities are unlikely *not* to have a class in which there is no one who has not been directly or indirectly affected by the experience of rape. How, then, should/could we respond to this reality? What are the key issues that we need to address in teaching rape in Roman love elegy?

Reading about rape can force a student to remember – even to relive – the experience of rape. Talking about rape in the classroom can force – or help – a student to break a long-held silence on her or his experience, prompting the possibility of “release” but also of retraumatization. As Madeleine Kahn’s remarkable account of teaching Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* – labeled by her Myth class “a handbook on rape” (Kahn 2004, 440) – vividly illustrates, reading about rape can trigger the release of particularly painful (and sometimes frozen) memories for survivors of sexual violence. Quoting one student’s response to reading Ovid, Kahn offers a stark reminder of the blurred boundaries between representation and reality that reading about the subject of rape can bring about (Kahn 2004, 441): “That Philomela story is one of the stories I had the most trouble reading ... It’s like being raped all over again ... It was terrifying for me to read.”

The possibility – likelihood – that this student’s experience might be – is being – repeated in our own classrooms and in the encounters of our own students with Roman elegy is also terrifying. But there are pedagogical strategies that we can adopt to cope with this growing problem (and to help our students cope) – not least of all by sharing with each other our own experiences of teaching, and by sharing the experiences and solutions of other teachers in other disciplines. In this light, I have found Wendy Hesford’s reflections on teaching English Literature particularly relevant to teaching rape in Roman elegy (Hesford 1999, 210):

One of my goals in teaching such material is to foster in students an awareness of the historical and cultural contexts that shape the production and reception of representations of violence, trauma, and resistance.... That interpretations are shaped by cultural frames of reference is not, of course, new knowledge. But what is new for me at least is finding effective ways to illustrate to my students the material rhetoric of rape and the various interpretive levels at which negotiations and contradictions among rape scripts occur.

Hesford’s emphasis upon “rape scripts” and their “cultural frames” fits nicely with the study of Roman love elegy, where we already encourage students to think about the elegiac lover’s discourse as a kind of script (see Kennedy 1993, 64–82) and where the commentaries and secondary scholarship we recommend traditionally – classically – discuss Latin love elegy and its poets within a cultural and contextual framework. In particular, we are likely to direct our students to view the motifs of rape and sexual or eroticized violence in elegy as part of generically specific literary *topoi*, as figures and

tropes reflecting elegiac commonplaces of *servitium* or *militia amoris*. We will discuss with them the metaphors that figure love as a kind of slavery or warfare, sex as an act of domination or violence, and help them to see these figures as part of the complex dynamics between the *arma* (weapons) of epic and the *amor* (passion) of elegy, where rape manifests the *ira* (anger) that is common to both. And we may suggest to them that in these elegiac tropes can be seen the performance of male anxieties attending the crisis in masculinity and *Romanitas* (Romanness) brought about by Augustan politics and violently played out in and upon both female and elegiac *corpora* (bodies/texts). Indeed, David Fredrick's persuasive account of "reading broken skin" in Roman elegy provides a neat summary of precisely the sort of approach to sexual violence and rape that many of us adopt in our teaching of elegy (Fredrick 1997, 190):

Elegy opposes Callimachean metaphor to epic, the generic stand-in for elite masculinity and its privileged relation to the "real" defined as political power. Extravagantly artificial, it assumes the glamorous but shameful status of the act. It simultaneously pursues a sadistic narrative reminiscent of the genre it had seemed to reject and inscribes a wound on female flesh to represent this narrative. When it says of the wound, "This too is text," elegy exposes the semiotic dilemma of the male body defined by a vanishing capacity for political action.

The risk in such an approach to teaching rape is that it sanitizes sadistic and sexual violence in elegy as exclusively literary or semiotic in both form and effect – a culturally, generically, and historically specific product of the Augustan age. During one particularly lively seminar discussion of rape in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, a male student in my class once tried to calm the disapproval of his female peers with (what he deemed) a helpfully humorous reminder that "no animals or women were harmed in the making of this poem": the response from his (self-selected) female seminar partner, "Well, I'm hurt *now*," persuaded me if not my student that however stylized, sanitized, or normalized ancient literary representations of rape and sexual violence might seem, I should not underestimate their power to cause new pain. In the next class I gave everyone a copy of Propertius 2.5, where he declares that he will *not* tear the clothes from Cynthia's body, smash down her doors, pull out her hair or bruise her face, but will write poetry about her instead (2.5.21–27): an explicit acknowledgement from the world of Latin love elegy that such poetry "really" does have the power to cause injury and harm (see Fredrick 1997, 181).

What Hesford's pedagogical strategy encourages us to do, however, is to invite students to reflect upon the rape scripts and cultural frames that shape not only the texts they are reading but also their own readings of those texts. Viewing the rape scripts of Roman love elegy can help students to think self-reflexively about the rape scripts that prevail in their own culture: the twenty-first century narratives and discourses that represent rape as a female fantasy, that represent women as sexually passive and as physically weak, as agents only in so far as they are to blame for inviting, arousing, or allowing themselves to become victims of rape or violence by their dress, their flirtations, their drunkenness, or, indeed, their work in the "sex industry" (see Higgins and Silver 1991 and Brownmiller 1975). Considering these representations as such – as part of a culturally dominant discourse or script like that performed in Roman elegy – can, Hesford suggests, enable students to negotiate the complex relationship between the lived reality and the literary representation of rape.

While rape in Roman elegy is perhaps not as prevalent a motif as in, say, Roman comedy or in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (see Curran 1978; Stirrup 1977; Richlin 1992a; Packman 1993; Smith 1994; James 2008), the commonplace of sexual violence in elegy posits real challenges to be negotiated by both teachers and students. In my experience of teaching love elegy (both in translation and in Latin), while rape is well known to be "the dirty little secret of Ovidian scholarship" and poetry (Curran 1978, 214), students are unwilling to view dreamy Tibullus or passionate Propertius as capable of anything as nasty as rape – or, at least, not "*rape* rape" as they prefer to designate it. They may quickly detect the vocabulary of rape and eroticized violence in Tibullus' elegy 1.4 (aptly introduced by Guy Lee as one of Tibullus' most "Ovidian" poems – Lee 1990, ix), but they tend to see Tibullus' sexual encounters with his boyfriend Marathus as anomalous and distinct from his relationships with Delia and Nemesis and thus his broader identity as an elegiac poet-lover. I ask them to read the following section positing first a male and then a female object of desire to explore their differing attitudes to gendered sexual relations – and to sexual violence (1.4.51–56, my translation):

si volet arma, levi temptabis ludere dextra:
 saepe dabis nudum, vincat ut ille, latus.
 tunc tibi mitis erit, rapias tum cara licebit
 oscula: pugnabit, sed tibi rapta dabit.
 rapta dabit primo, post afferet ipse roganti,
 post etiam collo se implicuisse velit.

If he wants to fight, try to play with a gentle hand;
 often offer him your exposed flank so that he can overcome you.
 Then he'll be gentle with you, then he'll allow you to steal precious kisses:
 he'll struggle but he'll give you what you take.
 He'll give what you take at first, but afterwards he's yours for the asking;
 afterwards he'll even want to clasp your neck of his own will.

An initial class reading that emphasizes the boyish horseplay of this scene resolves in a rereading to focus upon the brutality of its sexual violence, with students commenting particularly upon Tibullus' attention to the change in Marathus in its aftermath – his complete submission, his clasping of Tibullus' neck (*collo ... implicuisse* – 1.4.56) more like a suppliant (or a victim of rape) begging to be spared than an amorous lover. Here, teaching Tibullus in Latin rather than in translation makes a huge difference: students reading this passage in translation will necessarily miss something of both the eroticism and the militarism of its language, and the repetition of rape vocabulary – rendered in Guy Lee's (otherwise excellent) translation as "stolen kisses" following a vigorous bout of boys "fencing" together. Recognition that this poem (albeit in subjunctive fantasy form) may represent that still taboo topic, a male rape, seems to do little to challenge student assumptions about (the absence of) sexual violence elsewhere in the Tibullan *corpus*, however. When, in elegy 1.6.73, Tibullus declares that he would never *want* to hit Delia (*non ego te pulsare velim*), students *want* to believe him. And when, in the midst of another nostalgic fantasy in 1.10.51–58, Tibullus imagines himself as a drunken farmer beating his wife, the prospect of sexual assault and rape further suggested by the contextualization of this violence in the heat of Venus' wars (*Veneris ... bella* – 1.10.53), students similarly tend to (want to) see this as a counterfactual to the actual behavior of

the poet-lover, who “only” rips the thin dress from his lover’s body, messes her hair, and makes her cry (1.10.59–64). Rape in Tibullus, by my students at least, is admissible (only) as fantasy. The question I want students to ask of themselves is the degree to which this fantasy may be a product of their own cultural “rape as fantasy” script.

The same student response – and the same question – seems to hold true for Propertius. When, in elegy 1.3, the poet-lover watches a sleeping Cynthia and projects idealized fantasies upon her sleeping form (see Greene 1998, 51–59), he fears that in her dreams she is being “forced” – that is “raped” against her will (*neve quis invitam cogeret esse suam* – 1.3.30). Students are usually quick to agree with Greene’s view that Propertius’ concern represents “a projection of his own sexual desires and intentions” (Greene 1998, 57) – that is, his own rape fantasy. But this elegy also invites students to question their own engagement in this rape fantasy and narrative by reconsidering their position as viewers and voyeurs (so often the role assigned to readers of Roman love elegy and of rape narratives more generally: see Richlin 1992a, 161–169). By resisting the principal part that is scripted for them here, and by identifying not with the poet but with the *puella*, who may – from this alternative point of focalization – have good reason to have nightmares about rape from a boyfriend, a very different reading is released. In fact, after rereading this elegy from Cynthia’s point of view, my students are often eager to condemn the drunken Propertius (with suggestive apples in hand) as a “stalker” and a “perv,” recognizing that rape is not the sole preserve of strangers and psychopaths but of boyfriends and friends too.

While my students often need encouragement to see the operation of “rape’s figures and tropes” (see Kennedy 1993, 46–63 and in this volume) in Propertius and Tibullus, they seem more open to the idea that Ovid writes rape according to a script: the idea that the elegiac poet-lover performs a (pre)scripted elegiac lover’s discourse, after all, is overtly authorized by the text of the *Ars Amatoria*, perhaps signaled most clearly in the precepts of the Ovidian *praeceptor amoris* which advise the would-be lover to “choose the girl to whom you will say “I love you” (*elige cui dicas “tu mihi sola places”* – *Ars* 1.42). This makes it easier for some students to read Ovid’s troubling narratives of rape and sexual violence, to read the assault in *Amores* 1.7 as a witty exposé of the brutality of the elegiac lover’s discourse, to see as self-conscious fictions the rape fantasies played out in *Amores* 1.4.7–10 (where Ovid imagines himself as a centaur and Corinna as Hippodamia, so strong is his desire to – as Showerman’s Loeb has it – “carry her off”) and 1.5.13–16 (where Corinna role-plays the male fantasy that women want to be raped). But in reading Ovid too, I have found that inviting students to question their own cultural assumptions about gender and rape helps to illustrate not only “the material rhetoric of rape” (Hesford 1999, 210) but also the complexity of the multi-layered interpretative strategies that Roman elegy as whole – not only its rape scripts – demands of its readers.

So, students troubled (even hurt) by Ovid’s suggestion in the *Ars* that a drunken woman invites and even *deserves* rape (3.765–68) can better negotiate a multi-layered reading that acknowledges the full register of her or his responses by recognizing that such a rape script may be present in the discourses of their own culture. Alongside the questions of agency and culpability that this poem raises, students will recognize the gendered “double-standard” that allows sympathy for a drunken poet fantasizing about rape but denies sympathy to a drunken female victim of rape. From this recognition, they

may reflect further upon the challenges of reading Ovid's precept in a cultural context that is itself equivocal on the subject of rape and alcohol: a 2007 study by HMCPS and HMIC conservatively estimated that alcohol is involved in 34% of reported rape cases in the UK each year but reported that there is a high chance of non-prosecution or acquittal for rape in these circumstances because many UK juries seem (incredibly) to share the view of the *praeceptor amoris* on this subject.

So, when reading and responding to Ovid's claim that women secretly *enjoy* rape (*Ars* 1.664–706), students can approach the poem armed with questions for the text, for themselves, and for each other. When Roman love elegy tells them (*Ars* 1.673–76, my translation):

vim licet appelles: grata est vis ista puellis:
 quod iuvat, invitae saepe dedisse volunt.
 quaecumque est veneris subita violata rapina,
 gaudet, ...

You can call it rape: but girls like it:
 often they want to give unwillingly what they secretly desire.
 The girl who you take by sudden violent rape is pleased ...

students will know what questions to ask in their negotiations with these provocative poems and poets: Who speaks this rape script? Why? And to whom? How should I respond? And how would Ovid's audiences have responded? To what extent is this script a product of its specific literary context, of its own genre, culture, and historical moment? To what extent is my response a product of *my* own experience, context, culture and historical moment? What is the relationship between the reality and the representation of rape and sexual violence? How can I use the rape scripts of Roman love elegy to "break the silence" that so often surrounds the difficult subject of rape? How can I renegotiate, resist, reread and respond to representations of rape both in and out of the material and textual worlds of Roman love elegy? With questions like these I hope in some way to help equip my students – both the Danaids and the Amazons (*Ars* 3.1) – to enter those worlds more safely.

Thanks to my students and personal tutees at Bristol, to Sharon James, and to Alex Wardrop.

FURTHER READING

For those teaching Roman love elegy, a number of works dealing with the subject of rape and representation in the classroom are well worth reading: Wendy Hesford's "Reading Rape Stories" offers some particularly useful insights from the perspective of a teacher of English Literature, as does Laura Tanner's *Intimate Violence: Reading Rape and Torture in Twentieth-Century Fiction*. On feminist pedagogy more broadly see Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore on *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy*, Susan Gabriel and Isaiah Smithson on *Gender in the Classroom*, Sue Middleton on *Educating Feminists*, and Francis Maher and Mary Kay Tetreault on *The Feminist Classroom*. On feminist pedagogy in the Classics

classroom, Laura McClure's short introduction to "Feminist Pedagogy and the Classics" in the 2000 special edition of *Classical World* is essential reading, along with Sharon James' essay on "Feminist Pedagogy and Teaching Latin Literature" and Madeleine Kahn's reflective article on "'Why Are We Reading a Handbook on Rape?' Young Women Transform a Classic." For students who want to pursue this subject in greater depth, Amy Richlin offers the perfect starting point in her chapter on "Reading Ovid's Rapes" and David Fredrick's essay on violence in Roman elegy should be the next stop. The essays by Leslie Cahoon, Phyllis Culham, Eva Keuls, and Amy Richlin in the 1990 special edition of *Helios*, Ellen Greene's essay on "Travesties of Love: Violence and Voyeurism in Ovid *Amores* 1.7," Sharon James on "Slave-Rape and Female Silence in Ovid's Love Poetry", and Leslie Cahoon's articles on "A Program for Betrayal" and "The Bed as Battlefield" are all essential reading on this topic. Susan Deacy and Karen Pierce's work on *Rape in Antiquity* and Roy Porter and Sylvana Tomaselli's study of *Rape* will help to locate "elegiac" rape in its broader cultural and historical context.

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CHAPTER 33

Teaching Rape in Roman Love Elegy, Part II

Sharon L. James

Teaching about rape is never easy. It's a disturbing subject, one that should, and always does, upset students. It arises with alarming frequency in classical art, drama, literature, myth, and history, and thus poses a problem for almost anybody who teaches in these fields. It is certainly possible to teach Roman love elegy without touching upon the subject, but to do so requires omitting a fair amount of Ovid, and avoiding the subject in Propertius and Tibullus as well. The alternative is to avoid the issue by describing the sexual relations of the lover-poet with his *puella's ancilla* (*Am.* 2.8; *Ars* 1.375–98, 3.665–66) as seductions, dalliances, liaisons, or adventures, and by asserting that the injunction to rape in *Ars* 1.674–706 is not to be taken seriously. Contemporary students, ever-alert to violence – sexual or other – against women, will not believe such remarks. Either approach risks misrepresenting elegy and its consciousness of socio-sexual relations in antiquity.

The issue of teaching rape in elegy, as with any classical and non-English literature, divides into a matter of language: if I'm teaching a Latin class, graduate or undergraduate, I teach one way, but with a translation course, particularly a large class, I prepare and present quite differently. This essay presents an overview of my experiences and is thus, inevitably, idiosyncratic, but I hope it will prove useful to others faced with conducting classroom discussion about rape.

1. Prolegomena: Sexual Violence in Elegy

Rape is part of a pattern of violence toward women in elegy, a subject most visible in Ovid. The points of such violence (e.g., *Am.* 1.7, *Ars* 2.165–74, the rape of the Sabine women in *Ars* 1) are well known enough not to need drawing out here. But well before

Threats against Cynthia's body are found even in the joyous celebration of the previous night's epic sex: if she continues to sleep clothed, she'll suffer his rage (2.15.17–20):

But if you stubbornly keep lying down in bed, dressed,
 you'll feel my hands by way of your torn dress:
 in fact, if my anger should carry me further,
 you'll show wounded arms to your mother.

This combination of sex and violence, even well buried in a largely ecstatic poem, will not escape the notice of students. Of course, Propertius' poetry more often shows Cynthia as the agent of violence, and her rage is very exciting to her poet (see, e.g., 1.4.17–28; 3.8). In my experience, students find this particular combination – i.e., Cynthia's violence and her lover's delight in it – to be comic, but they are never amused at a threat of male violence to a woman.

Beyond these references to sexualized violence, there are a few veiled invocations of rape in Propertius and Tibullus, rarely recognized as such. There is a special place in Hell for anybody who interferes with Tibullus' loves: *illic sit quicumque meos violavit amores* ("that's where the man should be who violated my love," 1.3.81). The term *violare* recurs at Tib. 1.6.51: *parcite quam custodit Amor violare puellam* ("don't violate the girl whom Amor guards"). On both lines, commentators have read *violare* as meaning "interfere with my relationship." In a future project, I will argue in detail that both lines also permit a reading of rape, for several reasons; here, I note that *violare* can mean rape in elegy (*Ars* 1.375), and *amores* can mean "sweetheart" or "girlfriend" in Latin poetry (e.g., Catullus 10.1, 45.1). Sexual force at Tib. 1.4.51–56 is marked with three forms of *rapere*, attached to *oscula*; the boy's resistance (*pugnabit*, 54) further identifies the forcible nature of the sexual encounter. As Liveley (this volume) notes, students are often reluctant to see homosexual rape here. They may even attempt to pass it off onto Priapus, rather than the Tibullan speaker, but they must acknowledge the identification of the two – both are erotodidacts (the speaker calls himself *magistrum* [75] and speaks of his teachings [84]). This passage looks forward to the lesson on rape in *Ars* 1.663–706.

The final oblique reference to rape comes in Propertius 1.3, where the drunken lover-poet contemplates rape of the sleeping Cynthia (13–16; see Yardley 1980). Shortly after, he fears that she is having a nightmare of being raped (28–30):

I stood still, believing in a meaningless omen,
 fearing that visions were bringing you unaccustomed fears,
 or that someone was forcing you, against your will, to be his own.

Again, euphemistic phrasing elides the physical reality of rape (and focalizes it through a male perspective). Regardless of contextualized interpretation, students, on some level, see these moments through their own consciousness of sexual assault on unconscious women, something all college students are aware of.

I have belabored these points in Propertius and Tibullus, to make my case that sexual violence and rape exist before Ovid. These easily overlooked points are the seeds that burst into unmistakable blossom in Ovid, in whose poetry the subjects cannot be missed.

2. Reading Elegiac Rape in Latin Classes

In Latin classes, the topic of rape is contextualized in Roman social structures and gender values, in Roman historical myth (seen in Propertius 4.4 and in Ovid's tale of the Sabine women in *Ars* 1), and in scholarship on gender and women in elegy. Many students will be familiar with the numerous rapes in Greek myth. In my experience, students in a Latin class can generally deal with rape in Roman elegy with relative calm. But unless the syllabus avoids all the non-Ovidian elegies that touch on violence between lover and *puella*, students will inevitably notice these troubling moments. Since my own reading of elegy is based in the social backgrounds of its erotic relationships, I read these episodes as demonstrating several points. First, *meretrices* such as the *puellae* were perpetually at risk of sexual violence and rape, so in one respect elegy is simply acknowledging that fact of their lives. (Hence, as Harrison [1994, 22] notes, the lover's fear that Cynthia is dreaming about rape "is presented as lying at the back of the poet's mind as a possibility in the real world.") Second, the elegiac male urge to violence is often retributive, as shown in Propertius 2.5, and thus demonstrates the lover's constantly smoldering resentment at the lower-class woman who must be called his *domina*. In other words, the urge reveals characteristics that belie the lover-poet's repeated expressions of passivity, suffering, and devotion, and his representation of her as *dura* and *saeva* (hard, savage). Finally, these points in Propertius and Tibullus provide crucial context for Ovid, whose elegy programmatically exposes male sexual violence and rape.

Finally, course organization: I organize by chronology, as I want students to see how elegy developed in its brief *floruit* (reminding them that we have no idea what was in Gallus; see Gibson in this volume). In a topic-organization, I would include a unit on sexual violence and rape, two-thirds of the way through the syllabus. I tell students on the first day that sexual violence and rape come up in this poetry, and that one of our concerns is what their presence means for elegy. Undergraduates may be surprised to hear that Latin poetry includes such things, but graduate students usually know the mytho-historic background of rape in antiquity. I treat the subjects as a part of elegy's exploration of gender, power, and sex.

I begin with Propertius Book 1, and then move to Tibullus Book 1, followed by Propertius Book 2, Tibullus Book 2, and so on. Ovid comes last. (I note here that I do not take the view of Knox [2005] on the chronology of Propertius and Tibullus Books 1.) References to rape are visible very early on, in Prop. 1.3. This poem easily provokes discussion of rape of women who are unconscious. Such a subject may seem far from the realm of elegant, erudite, witty, playful elegy, but it arises right in the beginnings of the extant genre, and is spelled out at *Ars* 3.765–78 (and see Tatham [2000] on the motif in myth, art, and in other ancient poetry). In the era of widely available Rohypnol, students, especially women, are acutely aware that such an event could happen at any time. I am convinced that nearly every female student in a US college either knows or knows of another student who has been raped while unconscious under the influence of Rohypnol administered for the purpose. (I've learned, to my horror, that my students know of such events even among high school students.) Reading Terence in one class, I discovered that *all* my students knew somebody who had suffered such rape; several of them knew young men who had committed it, thinking it not a crime because the victim was unconscious.

Most students don't seek to discuss the subject of such rape in class, but they think of it when they are reading this poem, though it tends not to be their primary focus in this poem, which has many other elements to occupy their attention. When teaching Prop. 1.3, therefore, as well as Tib. 1.3 and 1.6, I point to these passages and say that elegy shows its consciousness of a male impulse toward sexualized violence and rape, subjects we will see treated more openly later on. Students tend to be stunned at the end of Tibullus 1.10. There is always a discussion of the dynamics of this strange passage, which concludes his first book. Students track these dynamics through Propertius Book 2, recognizing the repressed urge to violence in 2.5 and the absurdity of the death threat in 2.8. By the time they read 2.15, they are familiar with the brilliantly balanced tension of humor and violence in Propertius, and with the way elegy uses this tension to undercut the speaker's claims of passive devotion. At this point, they've read enough elegy to take in further contextualization on such topoi as the *komos* and the analogous passage in Plautus' *Cistellaria*, where the demented Alcesimarchus makes a similar threat (see James in this volume). Soon after, they read Prop. 3.8 and see that in the mixture of violence and sex, the *puella* can be an active participant; I mention such passages to them in advance, to put their readings into context.

By the time we reach Ovid, students are prepared for violence and rape, though they are still surprised and disturbed by *Amores* 1.7 and 2.7–8 (as was I when I first read Ovid). The speaker's personality and prejudices become a major element in discussion, as his hostility toward women grows more animated, particularly in the *Ars*. (I note here that rape and violence do not dominate class discussions – they arise in class as they arise in the poetry.) When we get to the *Ars*, we are near the end of the term, and students know how to read and interpret Ovid. Graduate classes read a wide range of scholarship (much of which is in disagreement), so students are prepared for the poem's sexual dynamics.

3. Reading Elegiac Rape in English

It's hard to know how widely Propertius and Tibullus are taught in translation. I have used a small amount of their poetry in translation courses, but what I usually teach is the *Ars amatoria*. Colleagues in other departments also teach the *Ars* in their classes, as relevant material for later European literature, and for courses on Women's Studies. Teaching women in antiquity, I don't ask students to think about what it means for elegy that Ovid includes such subjects as domestic violence, slave-rape, and abortion: those are questions for my Latin classes. I ask general-education students to read *Amores* 1.7, 2.7–8, 2.13–14 because they testify to such experiences in the lives of non-elite women. The same is true for the *Ars*.

In a general-education course, the subjects of rape and violence in Ovid must be managed with care. Students normally have no background in classics, and they tend to read as if they were seeing themselves in the poetry (on this phenomenon, with special reference to the *Metamorphoses*, see Kahn 2004, 2005). Even after they have studied rape in Rome (the Sabine women, Lucretia, Roman comedy), they react differently to Ovid. Why? My students say that they related to the *Ars* on a personal level. With its advice about grooming, flirting, going out to meet members of the opposite sex, etc., the *Ars*

seems very modern. Whether I'm teaching in Latin or English, I hear "this is going on now!" They read the *Ars* as being close to their own experiences in some ways and distant, in others.

Students react strongly to the *Ars*. I've had impassioned emails and office consultations about Ovid and rape on college campuses (the same thing happens when students read the *Metamorphoses*). I developed a handout with instructions for reading, for understanding that Ovid is not actually advocating rape (though students don't always read their handouts on schedule). I labor to explain that Ovid is not identical to the *amator* and *praeceptor amoris*, that in my view he deliberately shows these speakers as exploiting women, that he is exposing predatory male sexuality, and that we can learn about the lives of women in Rome from reading him. Latin students can draw on a wealth of scholarship to help them think through the passages about rape and violence, but that scholarship (my own included) is really not accessible to general education courses, as it is so deeply contextualized in classical studies.

I have learned that, if the subjects of rape and sexual violence come up in class, it is not possible to dismiss them by saying something like, "well, it wasn't the same in antiquity." Students won't, and shouldn't, believe such a statement. They react very personally, often with real anger – they often read themselves into the text, and see themselves in the positions of the rape victims on the page. They expect the instructor to account for this alarming experience (sometimes even to account for having assigned the reading in the first place; again, see Kahn 2004, 2005). The fact that the ancients considered rape to be a crime only when perpetrated against citizens makes students (male and female) even more upset.

So I've learned to say in advance, "this will be disturbing. It's disturbing on purpose, in my opinion, and we're going to talk about why. Please read the handout—it will help you make sense of what's going on." I then give specific instructions for the particular assigned text. Thus, for *Amores* 2.7–8, I tell them to think about what Cypassis is experiencing, and the risks she faces at the end of the diptych (as argued in James 1997). For *Ars* 1, I ask them to think about how a woman can say no to sex under the rules laid out in lines 673–706.

4. The Larger Context: Dealing with Rape on College Campuses

It is important to be honest with students about feeling uneasy teaching rape, and to depersonalize certain elements. Female students' rage can be alarming to male students, so I take pains to say that nobody thinks the men in the class are rapists or would-be rapists (they too often have a friend or relative who has suffered rape), and I encourage them to recognize their own outrage. (If they're not outraged, they don't tend to say so in my classes.) I tell students that they're welcome to come to my office if they're upset about what they're reading. Inevitably somebody comes for just that purpose. Nobody comes to tell me details about their experience of being raped, and I would not permit such a conversation; as I tell students, I'm not a therapist, but I can refer them to resources at the campus health center. I keep such conversations calm and low-key, and

I've found that students often really value the chance to think dispassionately about such things as male motivations for rape.

Since rape arises so often in classical literature and art, it is a pedagogical problem for virtually all classicists. It can be avoided in elegy classes, but not in others – myth, for instance, or any class involving the *Metamorphoses*. Students are more comfortable talking about rape with women; male instructors and teaching assistants often feel, reasonably, that their female students will be uncomfortable discussing rape with a male authority figure. Male colleagues and friends tell me they're so unsure how to handle the subject, particularly in the *Met.*, that they teach the material only in Latin. Such a decision is very understandable, but it creates a real loss, both for one's own teaching career and for students. Anybody who wants to teach these dangerous poems (elegy or Ovid's *Met.*) should do so. The most important thing is to say in the beginning of the term that the disturbing subject of rape comes up, that nobody will be required to talk or write about it, and that the instructor is available for office conversation if a student finds the text upsetting. I suspect that students are less likely to take their discomfort to a male professor or TA, but they greatly appreciate knowing that the male authority figure is aware of how unsettling it is to read, think, and talk about rape.

Here are some steps any instructor, male or female, might want to take in preparing to teach elegiac (or general Ovidian) rape:

- Begin by warning students, at the beginning of the term, that rape comes up in the material and that they may find it disturbing (especially the apparently light attitude of the *praeceptor Amoris*). Students who have been raped may want to miss the discussions, so it's important to be prepared to accommodate such requests.
- Point out that elegy is exposing predatory male sexuality, and ask them to think about that subject. If you think that elegy is colluding with predatory male sexuality, you may want to prepare with even more care and sensitivity.
- Ask them to think about what's missing – the female experience and the female voice—and to speculate about the female reading experience (on which see James 2008a).
- Remember that your class may have students who have been raped, and that almost certainly your students know someone who has been raped. Make sure to know some of the campus or off-campus resources available for them.
- Be prepared to be surprised by your students' responses.
- Don't be surprised if they don't want to talk about rape.

All classicists should prepare for this subject. Anybody who teaches myth is liable to end up dealing with rape, as students will express outrage or distress at visual and textual depictions of it. Rape is far more common on campuses than most faculty realize, and can come to an instructor's attention with no notice. Quite a few teaching assistants (male and female) have come to me for advice after receiving an email from a student who had been raped and would be missing class. More than once have I known of an instructor's discovering that one student in a class had raped another student (I learned that fact myself once) – and the instructor is not always a woman. In those circumstances, the teaching of rape – say, the rape of Europa or Leda or the Sabine women or Lucretia – becomes very charged, and requires sensitive handling.

There is a great deal of pedagogical material available on teaching about rape and on dealing with students who have been raped (see Liveley in this volume). Many colleges and universities have programs to help instructors deal with these issues. There are rape crisis centers everywhere, and they are very glad to give out their helpful advice – their staff knows more than faculty and administrators do about how common rape is on campuses.

It is disturbing to realize that our students are suffering rape, and to know that even those who haven't experienced it fear that they will. Female students are very aware that they may be sexually assaulted, even as the knowledge is so troubling that they tend to put it aside. (Male students also suffer sexual assault, but the stigma on male rape is so great that it is almost never mentioned or reported; my experience dealing with students has been almost exclusively with female victims, hence my focus here on women.) But in some classics courses, the subject of rape cannot be put aside. Elegy as a whole does not tend to bring rape to the fore, but Ovid does, in a way that cannot be ignored. We should be prepared.

FURTHER READING

Begin with Liveley in this volume; her recommendations for further reading need no additions from me. My own works (James 1997, 2003a, 2003b, 2008a, 2008b) have frequently taken up the subject of rape and violence in elegy, and I draw on them in teaching. Fredrick (1997) is very helpful for studying elegiac violence. Anybody who has not taught about Ovidian rape will find Kahn (2004, 2005) extremely helpful, if only as representing what are very possible classroom experiences; her sensitivity to her students' impassioned feelings is a model for anybody attempting to teach representations of rape in antiquity. Richlin (1992) offers a view of rape in Ovid that differs strongly from the one invoked here, and is required reading.

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